Vedic Religion and Mythology

A Survey of the Work of some Western Scholars

by

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In 1805, Henry Thomas COLEBROOKE published his essay, "On the Vedas, or Sacred Writings of the Hindus"[1], and thereby became entitled to the distinction of being the first Western scholar ever to write about the Veda.[2] In this essay, COLEBROOKE deals with what may be called the 'externals' of the Vedic literature rather than with its contents. He gives, mainly on the strength of the manuscripts collected by himself, the first sketch, in any European language, of the *Ṛgveda* and, to a smaller extent, of the other three Vedas. He also speaks of the Vedic *ṛṣis*, the various Vedic schools, and the Vedic commentaries, and incidentally touches the question of the authority of the Veda. He further refers to the *Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa*, the *Śāṅkhāyana-Brāhmaṇa*, and the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa*. From among the Vedāṅgas, he mentions the *Sūtras* only in passing, but he emphasises the importance of the *Nirukta* and evinces special interest in *Jyotiṣa*. About Vedic religion and mythology as such he has hardly anything to say. Whatever information about the Veda COLEBROOKE has given in his essay is generally correct, but his writing also shows that he had not made any deep study of the Veda. Indeed, COLEBROOKE cannot be said to have even formed a proper estimate of the Veda. He says that the Vedas are far too extensive to be translated in entirety and that the ancient dialect in which they are written is exceedingly difficult and obscure, and further adds that their contents are such as would render such translation hardly rewarding either to the reader or to the translator. COLEBROOKE's attitude towards the Veda was thus somewhat 'resigned', and, accordingly, his essay did not prove particularly conducive to further Vedic research.

Franz BOPP, who must be regarded as the real father of Sanskrit philology and comparative linguistics in Europe, reproduces in his work, *Ueber das Conjugationssystem der Sanskritsprache*[3], some specimens from the Vedas and a few episodes from the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* in German translation[4]; but, his interest in the Veda being linguistic and grammatical, he has completely ignored the subject of the religion and mythology of the Veda. Even *Vyāsa*, the German journal which was founded by Othmar FRANK in 1826 for the study of the 'philosophy, mythology, literature and language of the Hindu,' did not carry any article on Vedic religion and mythology. In 1830 was published von BOHLEN's *Das alte Indien mit besonderer Rücksicht auf Aegypten*[5]. In this book the author does mention the four *saṁhitās* of the Veda, but what he seems to have known about them is, indeed, very little. In the section on religion and cult, a reference to the Vedic religion is wholly absent, and Indra, Varuṇa, and Agni appear only as Lokapālas. According to von BOHLEN, in India, as in Egypt, religion had its beginning in the worship of the sun-god. Even in BENFEY's long article entitled "Indien,"[6] Vedic sources have remained conspicuously unutilised. Later, however, BENFEY produced some remarkable work in the field of Vedic studies, such as the edition of *Sāmaveda*[7], the glossary of which might be regarded as the first attempt in the direction of a Vedic dictionary, the monographs on Vedic grammar and accent, and the translation of *ṚV* which had come up to I.130. As for the Vedic mythology, BENFEY accepts the suggestion that *Sārameyau* in *ṚV* are to be related to Greek Kerberos. Further, according to him, Dionysos is to be understood as *Dyu* and *Niś* or day and night.[8] Incidentally, both BENFEY and MAX MÜLLER derive *śrat* in the word *śraddhā*—obviously wrongly—from the root *śru*.

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[1] *As. Res.* 8, 369–476.

[2] COLEBROOKE was at that time a member of the Superior Court of Appeal in Calcutta and Professor of Sanskrit in the College of Fort William.

[3] Frankfurt a. m., 1816.

[4] The translation of the episodes from the epics is metrical.

Friedrich ROSEN was a devoted pupil of BOPP (about whom it is said that he, being himself great in research work, accomplished more through his power of stimulating others than by systematic instruction), and his work *Radices Sanscritae*[9] clearly reflected the influence of the master. But ROSEN's true genius was revealed in the bold plan which he had conceived of publishing the entire *ṚV-Saṁhitā* with Latin translation and notes. In 1830, he published his *Rig-Vedae Specimen* for which he had utilised Yāska, Pāṇini, and Sāyaṇa. His work on the edition of *ṚV* was, however, interrupted by his untimely death, and the part of it, which is now available, was published only posthumously[10]. This part contains the text of the first 121 hymns with translation (which is, to a large extent, based on Sāyaṇa's commentary). The exegetical notes cover the portion only up to *ṚV* I. 31.6. This edition of *ṚV*, sadly incomplete as it had been, served as the basis of Vedic philology in Europe for a pretty long time. A new branch of knowledge was, as it were, taking shape, albeit falteringly, out of this edition. What is, however, significant in the context of the present study is that ROSEN's work affords a few glimpses in what later on developed into comparative mythology. He it was, for instance, who, in connection with the legend of the Paṇis and the cows, first drew attention to the comparable myth of Cacus and Evander.

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[5] O. FRANK also has written a monograph about the Indian connections with Egypt with particular reference to mythology.

[6] Published in 1840 in the *Allgemeine Encyklopaedie der Wissenschaften und Kuenste* edited by ERSCH and GRUBER.

[7] Leipzig, 1848.

[8] MAX MUELLER accepts this identification.

[9] Berlin, 1827.

[10] London, 1838.

Eugène BURNOUF (1801–1852) was 'essentially a pioneer and pathmaker', and, though he himself wrote little about the Veda, his lectures on the subject at Paris proved a veritable source of inspiration to his many pupils, among whom may be specially mentioned ROTH, MAX MUELLER, REGNIER, and NÈVE. ROTH's first work, *Zur Litteratur und Geschichte des Weda*[11], written at the age of twenty-five, is truly epoch-making. Verily it was this monograph which, small as it was, must be said to have inaugurated the era of critical Vedic scholarship. The monograph consists of three sections dealing respectively with the *Saṁhitā*, the *Prātiśākhya*, and the history in *ṚV*[12]. It would be interesting to compare ROTH's work with that of COLEBROOKE. As against the latter's counsel of despair, for ROTH, the Veda offered a very rich and fertile field for research. In his view, for the history of Orient—indeed, for the entire history of antiquity—, there was perhaps nothing more important than the study of the Veda. ROTH was interested more in the contents of the Veda than in its form—his work was 'philological' rather than linguistic, 'lexical' rather than grammatical. He believed that the hymns of *ṚV* were not the creation of a theological speculation, nor did they grow out of minute liturgical practice (which, according to him, definitely belonged to a later age). Their language, religion, and cult were more indigenous than those of the subsequent periods. The Indian commentators did not possess a key to these—they were overpowered by prejudice and did not have a sense of historical development. ROTH's slogan, therefore, was: 'Away from Sāyaṇa'. He insisted that the *ṚV*-exegesis must seek to make the texts yield their own sense. One must bring together and study comparatively all such passages as are related to one another verbally or from the point of view of contents. ROTH further emphasised that *ṚV* and the *Brāhmaṇas* had no direct connection, that there was a considerable gulf between the two[13]. Incidentally it may be pointed out that, through his essay, "Geschichtliches im Rigweda: Vasishthas Kampf mit Viçvâmitra,"[14] ROTH has made the first truly critical attempt towards a historical estimate of *ṚV*.[15]

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[11] Stuttgart, 1846.

[12] It is certainly amazing that ROTH could produce a book of such fundamental value in spite of the paucity of material (he had before him only COLEBROOKE's essay, ROSEN's edition of the first *aṣṭaka* of *ṚV*, and STEVENSON's edition of the *Sāmaveda* which he did not recognise as authoritative; for his monograph, ROTH depended almost entirely on his study of manuscripts), his young age, and the short period of his training.

[13] ROTH's exegetical methods resulted in an 'isolated' treatment of *ṚV*, a tendency to multiply the meanings of a word, and textual emendations. In connection with the last, ROTH seems to have depended largely on his intuition.

[14] This is the third section in ROTH's *Zur Litteratur und Geschichte des Weda*.

[15] ROTH's monumental work on the editions of the *Nirukta* and the *Atharvaveda* as also in connection with the famous *Petersburg Dictionary* further marks him out as the grandsire of Vedic studies.

Even in the field of religion and mythology, which are our chief concern here, **Roth**'s contributions are truly classical in character and mark the beginning of a new era. He insisted that the Ṛgvedic religion was by no means the outcome of priestly cunning, and tried to establish its human-natural character. His general attitude was ethical-aesthetic as against the ethnological-scientific of the subsequent periods. He spoke feelingly of the *ṚV*-hymns with which the ancestors of the Indians, living on the banks of the seven rivers, invoked the blessings of their gods for themselves and their kinsmen, worshipped the rising sun and dawn, sang of the wars between the thunderbolt-bearing God and the demon of darkness, and called for the help of the heavenly powers in their own battles. His "Zur Geschichte der Religionen"[16] consisted of three essays: 1. Die Brahma-Religion, 2. Die Buddha-Religion, and 3. Die Ormuzd–Religion. In the first essay, and, to some extent, also in the third, he deals with Vedic religion and mythology. His other essay, "Die höchsten Götter der arischen Völker"[17], he has devoted mainly to the consideration of Varuṇa and Ādityas. **Roth** believed that Varuṇa personified the all-encompassing brilliant vault of the sky. This sky-god was once the supreme god of the Aryans (before the Indians and the Iranians had separated), but in *ṚV*, he was being gradually represented as a 'dethroned' sovereign. **Roth** identified Ādityas with Amesha Spentas and Varuṇa with Ahura Mazdah, and sought to explain the connection of this ancient sky-god with the god of the ocean. Aditi was for him the personification of infinity. According to him, Aśvins were the two bright streaks of the heaven ushering in Uṣas—the two harbingers of light in the morning-sky. The shining ether belonged to Indra. Some other minor points of mythological interest made by **Roth** were that *brahman* (which word he derived from the root *bṛh*) symbolised the stirring up of thought and the fullness of feeling for God, that Saraṇyū was the storm-cloud, and that only heaven, as the abode of the righteous, was referred to in *ṚV*, the existence of the wicked having ended with death.

From among the two other pupils of **Burnouf**, the approach to the study of the Veda of the one was grammatical, while that of the other was mythological. Adolphe **Regnier**'s *Étude sur l' Idiome des Védas et les Origines de la Langue Sanscrite*[18] constitutes the first critical and exact study of the Vedic language as such, while in his comprehensive monograph, *Essai sur le mythe des Ribhavas*[19], Félix **Nève** treats critically of the mythology relating to Ṛbhus, which, according to him, represents the first apotheosis in the Veda, and incidentally of the whole Vedic mythology in general[20]. **Nève**'s work is spoken of approvingly by Adalbert KUHN[21], who is regarded as perhaps the most enthusiastic sponsor of comparative mythology. The basis of KUHN's comparative mythology was threefold. KUHN believed that, just as the Indo-European peoples had, since *Urzeit*, a common language, they also had not a few religious and mythological concepts (as also customs and manners) in common. He further believed that the etymologies of the names of the various Vedic gods provided ample material for the study of these common religious and mythological concepts. In other words, comparative linguistics and comparative mythology went hand in hand. And finally he believed that most of the Vedic (and, therefore, Indo-European) gods were personifications of natural powers and phenomena, particularly the meteorological phenomena. In his "Zur ältesten Geschichte der indogermanischen Vӧlker"[22], KUHN first applied his comparative study of Indo-European (IE) languages—particularly Vedic, Greek and Germanic—to the reconstruction of Indo-European antiquity. But his principal work in the field of comparative mythology is *Die Herabkunft des Feuers und des Göttertranks.*[23] Here he points to the traces, among the various IE peoples, of a common pantheon of gods and a common mythology. These traces he discovers mainly in legends and folktales[24]. For this purpose, he has brought together a considerable amount of material, suggesting a large number of etymological equations (which are, however, not always acceptable) and mythological comparisons. He seems to think of the Vedic mythology not as an 'Indian' mythology, but merely as an aspect of the boundless IE mythology. All that the Veda does for him is to provide materials for comparison. This has resulted in the undue prominence which he has given to such concepts as Saraṇyū and Sārameya, whose counterparts, according to him, may be easily found in Erinys and Hermeias respectively. Uṣas reminds him of Brünhild. He identifies Ṛbhus with Greek Orpheus—even with Germanic Elben—and the Gandharvas with Kentauren. In his above-mentioned book, *Die Herabkunft des Feuers*, KUHN has studied, among others, the legend of Purūravas and Urvaśī and of Cyavana from the point of view of comparative mythology. His papers on "Pitars as phenomena of light", "Dwarfs as souls of the dead", and "Dwarfs as phenomena of light" are included in the second volume of *Mythologische Studien von Adalbert Kuhn.*[25] In the same volume he has dealt with "Cows in Indogermanic mythology". According to him, they represent clouds and rays of light. He believes that the Paṇis, who are said to have stolen the cows, are mythological beings, and emphasises their connection with Asura Vala.

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[16] Published in *Theologisches Jahrbuch* 5, 346-63; 6, 175-90; 8, 281-97.

[17] *ZDMG* 6, 67-77.

[18] First Part, Paris, 1855.

[19] Paris, 1847.

[20] **Neve** has appended to his monograph the Sanskrit text (with Sāyaṇa's commentary) and the French translation of the *ṚV*-hymns to Ṛbhus.

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[21] *KZ* 4, 103.

[22] *Ind. Stud.* 1, 321–63.

[23] Gütersloh, 1859.

[24] It may be pointed out that KUHN had already published a paper entitled "Ueber die Vṛihaddevatā" in *Ind. Stud.* 1 (1850). This would indicate that he took special interest in Indian mythology almost from the very beginning of his scholarly career.

[25] Gütersloh, 1912 (published after his death, by his son).

A reference may be made here to the linguistic and mythological investigations made by W. SONNE with special reference to *ṚV* I.50[26], which reveal the unmistakable influence of KUHN's approach and methodology. Speaking of Aśvins and Dioscuri, SONNE points out that two parallel rafters tied together by means of pieces of wood placed crosswise are the symbol of Dioscuri[27], and are referred to in the Veda as the contrivance with the help of which Aśvins rescued Bhujyu. In his *Indische Altertumskunde*, Vol. 1,[28] Christian LASSEN has represented the gods of *ṚV* mainly on the basis of ROTH's "Zur Geschichte der Religionen", resorting to much false etymology. In the second edition of that volume[29], however, he has made ample use of the findings of comparative mythology, particularly as set forth by KUHN whose *Herabkunft* he has cited quite frequently.

Albrecht WEBER was one of the most prolific Sanskritists in Germany. His interests extended over various branches of Sanskrit and Prakrit philology, but he has written comparatively little on Vedic religion and mythology as such[30]. However, at a very early stage in his career, he had directed his attention to a critical study of Vedic legends. As early as in 1850, he published in the first volume of his journal, *Indische Studien*, a paper on the two legends from the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa*, namely, the legend of Manu and the Deluge and the legend of Videgha Māthava. This latter legend, according to WEBER, clearly referred to the migration of the Vedic Aryans from the region of the river Sarasvatī to that of Sadānīrā in Kosala-Videha, Later, WEBER also dealt with other legends, such as those of the rejuvination of Cyavana, the revengeful requital after death, Vāmadeva's two mares, and Purūravas and Urvaśī. Of course, in the course of his profuse writing, WEBER had many occasions to discuss the nature of Vedic gods. While doing so, he has depended, to a large extent, on the etymologies of the names of these gods. At one place, for instance, he has identified Aśvins with the Gemini stars and has added that they were called Nāsatyau because they appeared 'like nose (or island) in the ocean of the morning sky'. Elsewhere he has accepted the equation, Sārameyau = Kerberos. He has also referred approvingly to the identification of Dyauṣ-pitā with Zeus Pater and Jupiter and of Sūrya with Helios and Sol.

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[26] *KZ* 12-15.

[27] *Odyss.* 12, 431 H.

[28] Bonn, 1847.

[29] Published in 1867.

[30] Reference may be incidentally made to WEBER's editions of the *Vājasaneyi-Saṁhitā* (Mādhyaṁdina and Kāṇva recensions, with Mahīdhara's commentary), the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* (Mādhyaṁdina recension, with extracts from the commentaries of Sāyaṇa, Harisvāmin, and Dvivedagaṅga), and the *Kātyāyana-Śrautasūtra* (with extracts from the commentaries of Karka and Yājñikadeva), 1852-1859, to his editions of the *Taittirīya-Saṁhitā* (1871-72), the *Adbhuta-Brāhmaṇa* of the *Sāmaveda*, and the *Adbhutādhyāya* of the *Kauśika-Sūtra*, to the research journal run by him, namely, *Indische Studien*, to his *History of Indian Literature*, and to his studies relating to the Prakrits and the Jaina literature.

The principal achievement of Theodor AUFRECHT in the field of Vedic studies was that it was he who published the first complete edition of *ṚV*.[31] This edition, which gave the text transcribed in Roman characters, must be said to have exercised, for a pretty long time, by far the greatest influence on the Vedic studies in Germany. As for the Vedic religion, AUFRECHT believed that Savitṛ, Varuṇa, Dyauḥ, and Viṣṇu were the oldest gods, and that, in *ṚV*, the worship of these gods seemed to be superseded by the worship of newer gods. About the same time when AUFRECHT's edition of *ṚV* was nearing completion, that is to say, in 1863, Émile BURNOUF, the nephew of Eugène BURNOUF, published his *Essai sur le Véda*[32], which as the subtitle indicated, consisted of studies on the religion, literature, and social organization of India from the early times to the brahmanic period. In this book, the younger BURNOUF has dealt, among others, with such topics as the origin of caste, the absence of any hierarchy among the Brāhmaṇas, the Vedic ritual, and the origin of gods and their symbolic nature[33]. His treatment of the Vedic religion was oriented by comparative linguistics and comparative mythology, but his general approach was essentially speculative. According to him, Vedic ritual was but an abridged representation of the grand working of nature. For him, Agni personified the principle of fire as also of life. Many of Émile BURNOUF's ideas about Vedic religion and mythology seem to have been later adopted and developed by BERGAIGNE.

In the field of Vedic studies, the name of Friedrich MAX MÜLLER is celebrated as that of the scholar who gave to the Vedists the *Editio Princeps* of the *ṚV-Saṁhitā* with the commentary of Sāyaṇa. But MAX MÜLLER must also be regarded as the first scholar who roused genuine interest for Veda among the generally educated people of the West[34]. He did not write only for the specialists, and yet his expert knowledge of the facts of the Veda invested his writings with a kind of authority. It was while attending E. BURNOUF's lectures in Paris that MAX MÜLLER received the inspiration for the edition of *ṚV* with Sāyaṇa's commentary. The first volume of this edition was published in 1849 and the last in 1874. As for Vedic exegesis as such,

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[31] *Die Hymnen des Ṛigveda* (published as volumes 6 and 7 of WEBER's *Indische Studien*), Berlin, 1861-63. Of course, the first volume of MAX MUELLER's edition of *ṚV* was published in 1849, but it took another quarter of a century to complete that edition. In the preface to the second volume of his edition, AUFRECHT gratefully acknowledges the inspiration which he had received for his work from ROSEN and ROTH. A mention may be made here also of AUFRECHT's edition (1879) of the *Aitareya-Brāhmaṇa*, with extracts from Sāyaṇa's commentary, glossary, index of verses from *ṚV*, and notes.

[32] Paris, 1863.

[33] On the one hand this book served as a complement, and more particularly as a corrective, to von BOHLEN's *Das alte Indien* (1830), and, on the other, it found its complement and corrective in ZIMMER's *Altindisches Leben* (1879).

[34] It was MAX MUELLER's 'popular' writings which prompted the specialists in the field to look upon him as a mere dilettante. On the other hand, MAX MUELLER also had some personal prejudices. For instance, he was disappointed with BOPP because the latter 'read' his lectures in the class. Similarly he entertained a kind of aversion to ROTH ever since he and ROTH had been together in Paris attending BURNOUF's lectures.

MAX MUELLER has not done much except perhaps his English translation of the Hymns to Maruts[35]. His main concern seems to have been the religion of the Veda[36]. MAX MUELLER believed that the true history of mankind was the history of man's religion. And he further believed that from no other source did one understand the origin and development of religion so thoroughly as from the Indian scriptures[37]. " While Hesiod gives us ", he writes, " as it were, the past history of a theogony, we see in the Veda the theogony itself, the very birth and growth of the gods, i. e. the birth and growth of the words for god[38] ". He did not approve of the tendency to study the mythology of the Veda as isolated from the religion of the Veda. According to him, myth-building was something morbid; a mythological religion always presupposed a healthy religion. Another favourite contention of MAX MUELLER's was that religion was closely connected with language, and that, therefore, the approach to the science of religion should be similar to that to the science of language[39].

MAX MUELLER started his discussion of the Vedic religion with certain firm assumptions. All religions, according to him, had some common basic elements, such as the realisation of the Divine in the actual, the feeling of human weakness and dependence, the faith in the divine ordering of the world, the consciousness of good and bad, and the hope for a higher and better life. Again, all religions, howsoevermuch they might differ in other respects, agreed in one point, namely that their evidence was not entirely supplied by sensuous perception. If, then, all religious ideas transcended the limits of sensuous perception, to what did they owe their origin ? Two possibilities could be suggested in this connection. Firstly one might think of some kind of external revelation. Or one might assume that man possessed a religious instinct by which he, alone of all other living creatures, was enabled to perceive the infinite, the invisible, the divine. MAX MUELLER was not inclined to subscribe to any of these two views in entirety, though, in connection with the Vedic religion, he does seem to have accepted an Uroffenbarung—an original revelation—as implied by the word *śruti*. Proceeding further in his own peculiar way, MAX MUELLER pointed out that, by a simple psychological analysis, one could discover " *three classes of things*, which we can perceive with our senses, but which leave in us three very distinct kinds of impression of reality "[40] : (1) *Tangible* objects, such as stones, shells, and bones, which were supposed to have been the earliest objects of religious worship by the

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35. S B E, 32.

36. MAX MUELLER's views on the subject of the Vedic religion are very well represented in his *Hibbert Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion* (as illustrated by the religions of India), delivered in London in 1878.

37. Of course, MAX MUELLER hastened to add that this did not mean that religion developed in the same way everywhere.

38. *Hibbert Lectures*, 197.

39. However, he often asserted that religious history was far more important than linguistics.

40. *Hibbert Lectures*, 180.

religion-historians who held fetishism to be the first beginning of all religion[41]; (2) *Semi-tangible* objects, such as trees, mountains, rivers, the sea, and the earth; and (3) *Intangible* objects, such as the sky, the stars, the sun, the dawn, and the moon. The testimony of the Veda, MAX MUELLER further pointed out, showed that, out of the three foregoing classes of objects, the first was " hardly represented at all among the so-called deities of the Rig-Veda "[42]. In other words, there were no traces of fetishism in *RV*, though, according to MAX MUELLER, they began to appear in more modern hymns, particularly those of the *Atharvaveda*. As for the semi-tangible objects, each one of them could be met with among the deities of the Veda. MAX MUELLER has characterised such deities as semi-deities. In the intangible objects could be discovered theg erms of what might be called full deities. Indeed, the various objects belonging to the second and the third classes were the windows through which the ancient Vedic Aryans first looked into infinitude—into divinity.

This, then, is a brief, but certainly not quite adequate, sketch of MAX MUELLER's view regarding the origin of the Vedic religion. MAX MUELLER's conception of the Vedic religion was essentially naturalistic. He believed that Vedic poets always sought to perceive the ' divine ', the ' supernatural ', the ' infinite ', behind the ' natural '. All ' divinities ', except those which, like the sky, the sun, etc., were actually visible, were anthropomorphised. And, usually, a name was given to a god, which denoted the special characteristic of the nature (or form) of that god, such as Indra (from *indu*=drop) the rainer, Rudra the howler, Maruts the thrusters, and Varuṇa the all-encompasser[43]. MAX MUELLER was a comparative religionist and a comparative mythologist, and he raised the superstructure of his theories pertaining to the subject of religion and mythology on the three basic assumptions, namely, the assumption of a common IE pantheon of gods and a common IE mythology, the assumption that most of the mythology was made up of natural phenomena translated into the language of myths and legends, and the assumption that etymologising the names of the Vedic gods helped, on the one hand, to illumine their character, and, on the other, to establish their relationship with their counterparts in other IE mythologies.[44] He accepts, for instance, the identification of Sārameyau with Hermeias (as suggested by KUHN) and of Dyu-Niś with Dionysos (as suggested by BENFEY). Saramā is compared with Helena, and consequently with Uṣas. Vivasvat and Saraṇyū (Erinnys) personify the sky and the dawn. Urvaśī also is Uṣas or the dawn. Aditi, implying infinitude or immortality, is one of the oldest names of the dawn, that is, of that portion of the sky whence every morning the light and life of the world flash forth. She personifies the golden sea behind the dawn. Aśvinau represent the day and the night, and Yama is the setting sun. Other linguistic and mythological equations accepted by MAX MUELLER are : Parjanya and Perkunas (Lith.), Dyauḥ and Zeus, Uṣas and Eos, Naktā and Nyx, Sūrya and Helios, Agni and Ignis, Bhaga and Bogu (old Slav.), Varuṇa and Ouranos, Vāta and Wotan, and Vāk and Vox. *Brahman* is connected with Latin *verbum* (which is, of course, evidently wrong). MAX MUELLER also speaks of the struggle for supremacy between Dyauḥ, the old primeval god, and Indra, the more modern and personal god. In the name Maruts can be seen the seeds of the Italian war-god Mars. Prometheus may have been the counterpart of Pramantha, Orpheus of Ṛbhu, and Pan of Pavana. In the word *asura*, meaning originally 'endowed with breath,' and afterwards god, one may recognise the first attempt at what has sometimes been called *animism* in later religion. Two essential concepts of the Vedic religion, apart from the semi-divinities and the full divinities mentioned above, are those of Aditi (infinity) and Ṛta (from the root *ṛ*=go: the path of the sun; therefore, order). MAX MUELLER thinks that, side by side with *śraddhā*[45], there are, in *ṚV*, traces of atheism or disbelief in god. But, according to him, atheism is a relative concept in the Veda.

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[41] MAX MUELLER definitely discountenanced this view and asserted that fetishism was not a primary form of religion.

[42] *Hibbert Lectures*, 198.

[43] These etymologies are, of course, not always convincing.

[44] KUHN, MAX MUELLER, HARDY, and SCHROEDER were among the chief protagonists of comparative mythology.

It will be seen that a distinctive feature of MAX MUELLER's view of the Vedic mythology is that, in his naturalistic conception of that mythology, he always emphasized a solar interpretation[46]. One did not need to wonder, he said, why so much of the old mythology, the daily talk, of the Aryans was solar. In his inimitably eloquent way he wrote : "What else could it have been? The names of the sun are endless, and so are his stories; but who he was, whence he came and whither he went, remained a mystery from beginning to end.... man looked up to the sun, yearning for the response of a soul, and though that response never came, though his senses recoiled, dazzled and blinded by an effulgence which he could not support, yet he never doubted that the invisible was there, and that, where his senses failed him, where he could neither grasp nor comprehend, he might still shut his eyes and trust, fall down and worship"[47]. It should, however, be remembered that solarisation of many Vedic divinities marked but a subsequent stage in the evolution of the Vedic mythology, and that MAX MUELLER's solar interpretation might refer only to that particular stage.

MAX MUELLER's special contribution to the study of the Vedic religion is his theory of henotheism in *ṚV*. The earliest form of the religion of the Veda, he says, is neither polytheism nor monotheism; it is what he prefers to call henotheism or kathenotheism, that is to say, "a successive belief in single supreme gods". It is to be clearly distinguished "from that phase of religious thought which we commonly call polytheism, in which the many gods are already subordinated to one supreme god, and by which therefore the craving after the one without a second has been more fully satisfied. In the Veda one god after another is invoked. For the time being, all that can be said of a divine being is ascribed to him. The poet, while addressing him, seems hardly to know of any other gods "[48]. To identify Indra, Agni, and Varuṇa is one thing; it is syncretism [49]. To address either Indra or Agni or Varuṇa as, for the time being, the only god in existence with an entire forgetfulness of all other gods is quite another. It is this latter tendency, the henotheistic tendency, which is fully developed and predominantly reflected in the hymns of *ṚV* [50]. By way of tracing the further development of Vedic henotheism, MAX MUELLER refers to the tendency of identifying one god with another, to the formation of dual divinities, to the concept of Viśve-Devāḥ, the All-gods in their collective capacity, and finally to the expedient of making one of the gods supreme above all the rest. He mentions three main directions of development—towards organized polytheism, towards exclusive monotheism, and towards atheism [51]. Speaking of the Vedic religion as a whole and correlating the different stages in its growth with the different periods of Vedic literature, MAX MUELLER says that the majority of the hymns of *ṚV* represent the childhood of that religion, the *Brāhmaṇas*, with their sacrificial, domestic, and moral ordinances, its busy manhood, and the *Upaniṣads* its maturity and old age.

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[45] With BENFEY, MAX MUELLER derives *śrat* in *śraddhā*–wrongly–from the root *śru*.

[46] It may be recalled that KUHN laid stress on a meteorological interpretation.

[47] *Hibbert Lectures*, 207–08.

The Italian scholar, Angelo de GUBERNATIS, was a comparative mythologist, and, though he had been a pupil of WEBER, he mostly followed KUHN, MAX MUELLER, and George COX[52]. He wrote his principal work on the animals in the Indo-European mythology in Italian, but it was first published in an English translation under the title *Zoological Mythology*[53]. In this book, GUBERNATIS has dealt with the animals under three categories, namely, the animals of the land (the bull and the cow being the most prominent among these), the animals of the mid-region, and the animals of water, and the starting point of the treatment in each chapter is *ṚV*. The relationship between the gods and the animals is variously expressed. A god is compared with an animal, as, for instance, when Indra is called *vṛṣabha*; or a divinity is represented as assuming the form of an animal, as, for instance, when Aditi is represented as a cow; or animals are said to drive the vehicle of a divinity and thereby reflect its character and power. GUBERNATIS's interpretation of mythology is naturalistic; he believes that the myths based on the phenomena relating to the sky are brought down to the earth and carried forward in the form of fables, legends, and fairy-tales in ever newer variations. Accordingly, whatever has been said about animals in mythology he traces back to the sun and the moon, the thunderbolt, the lightning, the dawn, the clouds, the night, and the darkness, and explains it in the light of the mutual connections between these natural phenomena. He further points out that a large number of myths have originated out of 'contradictions' and 'antetheses', that is to say, out of the contrasting forms in which these heavenly phenomena appear to one and the same observer, let alone, to different observers. Aurora is the morning and the evening twilight, but she appears also during the night, which fact explains why there is a reference to her slightly demoniac character in some cases. Indra is the god of rain and thunder, but he is also the nocturnal sun. About the two Aśvins, GUBERNATIS says that one of them represents the white moon and the other the sun, or he identifies them with the morning twilight and the evening twilight respectively. He further adds that Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa are the epic representatives of the Vedic Aśvins. Among other identifications in zoological mythology, suggested by GUBERNATIS, may be mentioned the following: The ass is the steed of the sun during the night; the goat is the sun; the stag represents the resplendent phenomena which appear in the cloudy or nocturnal forest; and the fox is the ruddy negotiator between the bright day and the dark night.

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[48] *Ibid.*, 271. Elsewhere MAX MUELLER says: There is a monotheism that precedes the polytheism of the Veda. Whereas the Semitic nations relapsed from time to time into polytheism, the Aryans of India seem to have relapsed into monotheism. The Aryans possessed an instinctive monotheism.

[49] According to MAX MUELLER, syncretism marks a stage between polytheism and henotheism.

[50] MAX MUELLER regards henotheism as the dialectic period of religion. It is not restricted only to India. It is natural, and therefore universal. Only one does not see it anywhere so clearly in its very growth as in the Veda.

[51] The atheism of the ancient Hindus, such as it was, would, according to MAX MUELLER, be more correctly called Adevism, or a denial of the old Devas.

[52] George Cox was an expert in Greek mythology.

[53] London, 1873.

In another of his works, namely, *Letture sopra la Mitologia Vedica*[54], GUBERNATIS treats of Vedic gods, beginning with Dyauḥ and ending with Rudra, in a more or less elementary manner. He compares the Vedic myths variously with Christian concepts. Elsewhere[55], he has characterised *ṚV* as the *Bible* of the Aryans. The folk-religion of the Aryans, according to him, is born out of their observation of natural phenomena. The hero of the bright phenomena is god, that of the dark ones is satan. GUBERNATIS asserts that mythology and 'epopea' are necessarily interdependent. At the same time, 'epopea' without war is unthinkable. Therefore, in mythology, the concept of heavenly war must predominate. Following this line of argument, GUBERNATIS discusses the different representations of this heavenly war in all the *maṇḍalas* of *ṚV* one after another[56]. For him, Vasiṣṭha, Viśvāmitra, and Sudās are all mythical characters[57]. Even the essential basis of the *Rāmāyaṇa* is, according to him, mythical. Laṅkā is the cloud or the night; Rāma is Viṣṇu or Indra, that is, the sun; Sītā is Uṣas or the dawn; the monkeys are the rays of the sun. In this connection, it must be pointed out that the etymologies suggested by GUBERNATIS are not always sound and that his mythological equations are often bold and farfetched[58].

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[54] Firenze, 1874.

[55] *Fonti vediche dell' Epopea*, Firenze, 1867.

[56] From this point of view, this work of GUBERNATIS may be regarded as dealing with the Vedic sources of the epics.

[57] On this point, GUBERNATIS has criticised MUIR, who, following ROTH, considers these three to be historical personages.

A kind of reaction against the approach to the Vedic mythology exclusively from the point of view of comparative mythology—an approach which was so enthusiastically sponsored by KUHN and MAX MUELLER—was but quite natural, and became evident, to a certain extent, in John MUIR's *Original Sanskrit Texts*[59], particularly in the fifth volume in the series. Volume 5 of MUIR's work has the subtitle, " Contributions to a knowledge of the Cosmogony, Mythology, Religious Ideas, Life and Manners of the Indians in the Vedic Age ", and provides, perhaps for the first time, through its rich but discerning collection of pertinent Vedic sources, a firm and efficient basis for a deeper and more critical study of Vedic religion and mythology[60]. This effort of MUIR, in a sense, implies his insistence that the Vedic religion and mythology ought to be studied primarily from the Vedic sources, the comparative methods being utilised only secondarily. It may, however, be pointed out that MUIR himself has not renounced comparative mythology altogether. He accepts the identification of Varuṇa with Ouranos, and consequently describes the former as representing the all-encompassing sky. He cites ROTH and WESTERGAARD in connection with the development of Varuṇa's character from the ancient sky-god to the god of the ocean. He also discusses the relationship between Varuṇa and Ahura Mazdah[61]. As for Aditi, MUIR considers her to be ' a personification of universal, all-embracing Nature, or Being ', while ROTH and MAX MUELLER, on whom he normally depends, see in her the personification of infinity. He refers to the view of GOLDSTUECKER, who distinguishes between the cosmic and the human or historical elements in the Aśvin-myth, and suggests that, like Ṛbhus, Aśvins were originally renowned mortals, who, in course of time, were translated into the companionship of gods[62].

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[58] GUBERNATIS has also written a book (1878–82) on Botanical Mythology, which constitutes a comparative history of the cult of plants. Another interesting book produced by him is a kind of cultural encyclopedia of India, in which he refers briefly to Indian gods, heroes, *ṛṣis*, etc.

[59] Volumes 1–4, London, 1858-63; Vol. 5, London, 1872. MUIR entered Bengal Civil Service in 1828 and served in India for nearly a quarter of a century.

[60] MUIR's work continues to be important from this point of view even to this day. Though the various studies on individual Vedic divinities, which have been published since then, such as the one on Aśvins by MYRIANTHEUS, on Dyaus Asura by von BRADKE, and on Aditi and Varuṇa by HILLEBRANDT, as also the comprehensive treatises on Vedic religion and mythology by KAEGI, OLDENBERG, HILLEBRANDT, and MACDONELL, have tended to supersede MUIR's *Original Sanskrit Texts*, their authors have, not infrequently, depended upon the material collected by MUIR.

[61] ROTH believed that Varuṇa was worshipped by the Aryans before the separation of the Indians and the Iranians. According to WHITNEY also, Ahura Mazdah had developed out of Varuṇa. SPIEGEL and WINDISCHMANN, on the other hand, regarded this as doubtful, and suggested that Ahura Mazdah was purely an Iranian divinity.

If AUFRECHT was the first scholar to bring out a complete edition of *ṚV*, Alfred LUDWIG was the first to publish a complete German translation of that Veda. Actually two German translations—one by LUDWIG and the other by Hermann GRASSMANN—appeared about the same time. The first part of GRASSMANN's translation of *ṚV* (*maṇḍalas* 2–8), with critical and exegetical notes, was issued at Leipzig in 1876, and the second part (*maṇḍalas* 1,9 and 10) in 1877[63]. LUDWIG's work was planned on a grander scale[64]. It consisted of six volumes—volumes 1 and 2 contained a complete translation of the *ṚV-Saṁhitā*; volume 3 was intended to be a kind of an exhaustive introduction; volumes 4 and 5 constituted a detailed commentary; and volume 6 consisted of a register of citations, an index of conjectures, a glossary, and a material and grammatical repertory[65]. The third volume of LUDWIG's work is entitled: *Die Mantralitteratur und das alte Indien, als Einleitung zur Uebersetzung*. In it, LUDWIG has brought together and supplemented through his own researches the findings in Vedic philology of ROTH, MAX MUELLER, and MUIR, among others. It is, indeed, a rich storehouse of materials. So far as Vedic mythology, religion, and philosophy are concerned, it may be pointed out that LUDWIG has, among other things, commented upon such concepts as *ṛta*, *brahman*, *satya*, and *māyā*. He has rejected the identification of Varuṇa with Ouranos. Varuṇa, according to him, was not the sky-god in the elementary sense of the word; Dyauḥ was the proper sky-god. More or less similar to, but perhaps more systematically written than LUDWIG's third volume is Heinrich ZIMMER's *Altindisches Leben*[66]. Curiously enough, ZIMMER has not at all dealt with mythology and ritual, though he has included in his book some sections on cosmology and astronomy, where his main authority is WEBER.

Friedrich BOLLENSEN is particularly well known as a critical editor of Sanskrit dramas, but he has also made a few interesting contributions to Vedic philology. In one of his "Beiträge zur Kritik des Veda"[67], he has dealt with the Vedic gods, Mitra, Varuṇa, Aryaman, and Indra. He depends largely on the etymologies of the names of these gods, but his etymologising is not always convincing. For instance, he derives *mitra* from the root *smi* which means 'to be bright', 'to emit rays of light'. According to him, Varuṇa originally represented the day-light. He connects the word *varuṇa* with the root *var*, which, he says, often implies the same thing as the root *vas* (= to shine). He understands *devaḥ aryaḥ* in *ṚV* VII. 64.3 as referring to Aryaman, who, in his view, is the proper Deus Aricus. On the other hand, Indra (derived from the root *indh*), says BOLLENSEN, is the national god in the religious context. Aśvins are, for him, the morning star and the evening star.

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[62] Incidentally, mention may be made of the metrical sketches of Varuṇa, Indra, and other gods, composed by MUIR and appended to his work.

[63] A mention may be made here also of GRASSMANN's *Woerterbuch zum Rig-Veda*, Leipzig, 1873.

[64] *Der Rigveda oder die heiligen Hymnen der Brāhmaṇa*, Prague, 1875–88.

[65] GRASSMANN's foreword to the first part of his translation was dated April 1876, while LUDWIG's foreword to the first volume of his big work was dated end of 1875. That was why LUDWIG's work could carry the superscripture: 'translated into German in full for the first time'. The two translations, it should be noted, reflected two essentially divergent approaches and points of view.

[66] Strassburg, 1879.

[67] *ZDMG 41* (1887), 494–507.

A mention may be made at this stage of the rather peculiar views about the Veda of Hermann BRUNNHOFER. BRUNNHOFER begins by emphasizing that, as the first step towards a proper understanding of the Veda, one must free oneself from ROTH's interpretation of it. His own starting point is the study of the names of persons and places occurring in the Veda. Depending mainly on phonetic similarities, he connects these names with the names of persons and places in ancient Iran, and asserts that the original home of the 'Indian Sanskrit-Aryans' was Iran and Turan. His principal work is entitled *Iran und Turan*[68], and comprises his historical-geographical and ethnological investigations about the oldest scene of Indian ur-history. His methodology, based on phonetic equations, is fully illustrated in this book. He had already suggested that *śakapūta* in *ṚV* X.132.5 was śaka-putra (son of Śaka), an Iranian poet of *ṚV*. Similarly he understands Dṛbhīka (*ṚV* II.14.3) as the representative of the Iranian family of Derbiks, and Nahus as identical with the old Persian *naqa*, which is used in cunneiform inscriptions with reference to Persian emperors. King Abhyāvartin (*ṚV* VI.27. 5, 8) is connected with the city Abīvard in Khorasan. Ṛṣi Agastya, connected with old Persian Asharagata, was an Iranian whose mastery over Sanskrit was not perfect. Śunaḥśepa also must have been of Iranian origin, for, "only the people who were mad about dogs, like the Iranians, could think of such a name". Pṛthuparśavaḥ (VII.83.1) are undoubtedly identical with the Parthians and the Persians; so too are Pārthavāḥ (VI.27.8) the Parthians. Tura Kāvaṣeya of the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa*[69] is an Iranian from Turan, and the river Kāroti, on whose banks he is said to have offered a sacrifice to the gods, is to be identified with the Iranian Haraquaiti[70]. Perhaps the most phantastic suggestion of BRUNNHOFER's is that one has to see in the words *apāmīvām..sedha* (X.98.12) a reference to the city Apameia on the Caspian passes. *Samudra* in *ṚV*, he further says, almost always denotes the Caspian sea. The rivers Oxus and Jaxartes are more akin to *ṚV* than the Indus[71].

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[68] Leipzig, 1889.

[69] IX. 5. 2. 15.

[70] This reference occurs in the *Śāṇḍilya*-portion of the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa*, which, according to BRUNNHOFER, is of Iranian origin.

[71] KERN has drawn attention to the very close relationship between the Vedic language and the Bactrian language. Indeed, he characterises the latter as a dialect of the former.

BRUNNHOFER has no doubt whatsoever about the Iranian provenance of most of the important *ṚV*-hymns. He even goes to the extent of asserting that "many Vedic *ṛṣis* not only never set foot on the Indian soil, but they presumably did not even know India".

In connection with mythology also, BRUNNHOFER has put forth some equally unrestrained views. At one place,[72] he compares Indra with Andreas, while, at another, he discovers the reflection of Indra's battle with Varcin in the battle between Anderiman and Gurgin described in the *Shahnamah*. Uṣas, whose chariot was shattered by Indra (IV.30.8 ff.), is, for BRUNNHOFER, queen Semiramis of Babylon who had accomplished a victorious campaign in the region of the Indus. The ornaments and weapons of Maruts remind him of the Central Asian cuirassiers of antiquity, namely, the Parthians[73]. In Cumuri he finds traces of the Sake-queen Tomyris. He surmises that Divodāsa was a Hittite Cappadocian[74]. Varuṇa who, according to BRUNNHOFER, was the god of the starry night-sky and the unending ocean, was transformed from the lord of the universe to Vṛtra, the enemy of the universe. On the strength of *ṚV* VII. 96.1, BRUNNHOFER characterises Sarasvatī as the 'assyrian' among the rivers[75]. He accepts the identification of the Gandharvas with Centauros, and, connecting the word *kandarpa* with *gandharva*, further suggests that Kandarpa, the god of love, may have been Gandharva who has survived from antiquity. Similarly, by a very bold stretch of imagination, he connects *mokī* (night) with Baukis of the Philomon-Baukis legend. It will be thus seen that BRUNNHOFER'S Vedic Iranism and Turanism has a very wide (and also wild) connotation and application.

Abel BERGAIGNE must be said to represent a distinct landmark in the history of the study of Vedic religion and mythology. Indeed, he was the first Western scholar to have devoted a whole book[76] exclusively to the consideration of the religion of the Veda. Both in the fields of Vedic exegesis and Vedic religion, he sought to cut new paths. As against the lexical efforts of ROTH and GRASSMANN, BERGAIGNE insisted that, as far as possible, the meaning assigned to a Vedic word should be such as would be found adequate in all the passages where that particular word occurred. Similarly, by way of a reaction against the methods of comparative mythology which had been, in a sense, overworked by KUHN and MAX MUELLER, he restricted himself only to *ṚV* and tried to reconvey the profuse and apparently complex mythology of the Veda in a simple system which could be expressed in a few formulas. According to him, *ṚV* was full of priestly rhetoric, subtleties, and paradoxes[77]. Mythology and cult were rigorously interdependent—one could not be properly explained without the aid of the other. The *ṛṣis* of *ṚV* were themselves quite conscious of this interdependence.

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[72] *Arische Urzeit, Forschungen auf dem Gebiete des aeltesten Vorder-und Zentral-asiens nebst Osteuropa*, Bern, 1910.

[73] BRUNNHOFER suggests that the Sanskrit-Aryans of *ṚV* must have already known gun-powder.

[74] That BRUNNHOFER sees in Ajamīḍha a reference to the common clan-father of the Aryans (aja = ārya) is a gross instance of phonetic anachronism.

[75] A pet theory of BRUNNHOFER'S is that *vavri* in *ṚV* (V. 19. 1) (Bawri) is to be identified with Babylon. BRUNNHOFER further suggests a babylonian origin for the *Nāsadīya-Sūkta* (X. 129). The *Hiraṇyagarbha-Sūkta* (X. 121) is of Iranian origin, while the famous *Varuṇa-Sūkta* in the *Atharvaveda* (IV. 16), which he compares with *Psalm* 139, is of Medish origin.

[76] *La religion védique d'après les hymnes du Rig-Veda* (three volumes), Paris, 1878–83. Though essentially limited to the hymns of *ṚV* this book bears the character of a veritable thesaurus of religious and mythological materials.

The religion and mythology of *ṚV*, as 'systematised' by BERGAIGNE in the form of what OLDENBERG calls 'algebraic' formulas, may be set forth, in broad outlines, as follows: The mythology of the Vedic Aryans is closely connected with their sacrificial cult. This latter, by the very rites which constitute it, or at least by the greater part of the formulas in which these rites are described, appears at once to be an imitation of certain celestial phenomena. These phenomena are of two kinds: (1) those which accompany the rising of the sun (solar phenomena), and (2) those which accompany the fall of rain after a long drought (meteorological phenomena). In both these kinds of phenomena, Vedic mythology distinguishes between male and female elements. The male element in the first group is the sun and the female element is the dawn (or dawns); the male and female elements in the second group are respectively lightning and cloud (or waters). These different elements can be represented differently in the framework of mythological anthropomorphism and zoomorphism[78]. The supposed relationships among these elements are consequently reflected in the mythological connections among these beings of two sexes whether in human or animal form. For instance, the concomittance, priority, and posteriority of the natural phenomena are expressed in terms of sexual union or collateral kinship, paternity or maternity, and filiation of the mythical beings, respectively. Of course, these relationships can be confounded or reversed according to the different or manifold points of view. This would explain the incest between brother and sister, and father and daughter, referred to in the Veda, as also such descriptions as 'the daughter has given birth to the father' 'the son has begotten his mothers'. The sun is represented as the son or the lover or the father of Uṣas; and the celestial waters are said to be either the mothers or the daughters of lightning. This mythological idiom is reproduced also in the description of the Vedic ritual. The Vedic ritual can be thought of as comprising two principal stages, namely, the stage of the preparation of the oblation and the stage of the oblation being offered into the sacred fire. Here, too, BERGAIGNE points to the male and the female elements. The male element is the fire and the female element is the oblation or the prayers, and both these are represented as corresponding to the male and the female elements of the celestial phenomena[79].

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[77] According to OLDENBERG (*Vedaforschung*), BERGAIGNE regarded *ṚV* as a product of bizarre rhetoric. OLDENBERG further says that BERGAIGNE did not bother to think of anything other than *ṚV*; he apparently missed the point that the literature immediately following *ṚV* dealt with the same sacrificial ritual for which the *ṚV*-hymns had been composed, and that, therefore, this literature could be regarded as a kind of commentary on *ṚV*. OLDENBERG adds that BERGAIGNE realised the importance of this literature only in his last days.

[78] The most frequently occurring figures of animals are: (males)—bird, horse (winged or otherwise), bull, calf; (females)—mare, cow.

One of the most basic assumptions of BERGAIGNE is that the sacrificial ritual is the true reproduction on earth of the cosmic happenings, that is to say, of the acts which are accomplished in heaven[80]. The elements of the ritual are not mere symbols of the elements of the celestial phenomena; they are, verily, identical with them in nature, and, like them derive their origin from heaven. Vedic sacrifice, it is emphasised, is not a mere imitation–it is actually accomplished by means of the elements borrowed from heaven by men who claimed origin from heaven. On the other hand, the natural phenomena are themselves regarded as sacrifice. BERGAIGNE explains that the real significance of a sacrifice being conceived as a replica of the celestial phenomena is that, under the particular form of naturalistic worship, the sacrificial practice produces in effigy that which it is desired should take place in reality. It is a kind of symbolic magic which is common to most of the primitive peoples and continues even up to a well-advanced state of civilisation[81]. BERGAIGNE further explains that the Vedic sacrifice, which is regulated according to the seasons of the year and even according to the hours of the day, has for its object the maintenance of the natural order of the world, in solar as well as meteorological phenomena. It can prove efficacious enough even to hasten rain-fall when needed[82].

BERGAIGNE'S conception of the Vedic mythology is, in the main, naturalistic. He accepts from his predecessors the suggestion that the principal phenomena of nature drawn upon by the Vedic mythology are sunrise and thunder. The various relations of heaven and earth are viewed as directly naturalistic[83]. BERGAIGNE, however, hastens to add that the Vedic mythology also knows of other deities besides those which directly represent the elements, or the worlds in which these elements operate. In this connection, he mentions Pūṣan and Viṣṇu[84]. As for Indra, that god does derive his attributes from the elements over which he rules. But he also has the character of a warrior-god[85]. According to BERGAIGNE, Indra is the god who makes the sun rise after the dawn, and who, armed with the thunderbolt, makes the celestial waters flow. It is, however, pointed out that, in the case of Indra, the sacrificial magic becomes effective in respect of the celestial phenomena only in an indirect way; Indra is said to be achieving his exploits, when intoxicated with Soma. In the context of Indra, BERGAIGNE makes a very significant observation. He speaks of a twofold conception of the order of the world in the Vedic mythology. In the Indra-mythology, this conception is 'dualistic', while in the mythology relating to Varuṇa and Ādityas, it is 'unitarian'. Both 'good' and 'evil' are involved in the Indra-mythology —the former being represented (in the physical sense) in the form of light and rain and the latter in the form of darkness and drought. The 'good' is related to Indra, the 'evil' to Vṛtra. As against this, Varuṇa (and Ādityas) are sovereign gods. They rule over the world 'unopposed', while Indra has to wage constant wars. In the 'unitarian' conception of the world-order in the Varuṇa-mythology, 'good' and 'evil' are referred to one and the same god. Accordingly, Varuṇa's character has a double aspect—propitious and penal—,while Indra is exclusively benevolent. Indra is always a friend, while Varuṇa acts like a judge.

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[79] The correspondence between the ritual and the natural phenomena is, according to BERGAIGNE, nowhere more evident than in the formulas which consecrate the relation of the prayers to the fire and the consecrated beverage.

[80] It may be recalled that this point had been adumbrated in the writing of BURNOUF (Junior), some years before BERGAIGNE wrote his book.

[81] MACDONELL complained that BERGAIGNE did not sufficiently distinguish sacrifice from magic.

[82] BERGAIGNE says that *do ut des* is a sufficiently exact formula of the relations established by Vedic worship between heaven and earth.

[83] Vedic gods are generally regarded as mere masks; behind them appear in reality the powers of nature; and between the reality and the appearance plays the bizarre rhetoric of the Vedic poets.

[84] Pūṣan is related to the sun and Soma, and Viṣṇu to Agni and Soma.

The study of the sovereign gods like Varuṇa leads BERGAIGNE to the consideration of the Vedic ideas about morality. He asserts that the *ṚV*-hymns are not the work of moralists. The purpose of these hymns is essentially ceremonial and ritualistic. The poets of *ṚV* have never sought to formulate morality in precepts. There may be, if at all, only vague generalisations regarding the vices to be shunned and the virtues to be practised[86]. The primary obligation which the Vedic Aryans owed to their gods is in respect of ritual. An omission or a mistake in it is an offence, but the nature of this offence is 'cosmic-ethical' rather than merely 'moral.' In this connection, BERGAIGNE speaks of a threefold concept of law (*ṛta*) —natural, sacrificial, and moral[87].

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[85] Agni and Soma, as the sun and the lightning, are also martial gods; they are conquerors of night and drought, of dawns and waters. But the difference between these two and Indra lies in the degree of personification of the natural powers.

[86] BERGAIGNE further clarifies this point by pointing out that, as against the *ṚV*-poetry, which is naturalistic and liturgical and which throws light mostly on the formation of myths and ancient religious belief, the Homeric poetry presents a picture of the morality of a primitive society in action.

[87] It would be seen that, though BERGAIGNE started with a view to presenting Vedic religion and mythology as a simple system consisting of a few easily intelligible formulas, he actually succeeded in producing only a complicated and essentially schematic pattern. As OLDENBERG points out (*Vedaforschung*), BERGAIGNE discovers in the simple, stirring nature-poetry of *ṚV* a somewhat arid collection of rhetoric subtleties. He further adds that the French *savant* has correct glimpses of a few details, but, on account of the lack of an instinct for religion-history and religion-psychology, his conception of the Vedic religion as a whole has tended to be deficient.

The lead given by BERGAIGNE for writing comprehensive treatises on Vedic religion and mythology was enthusiastically followed by a number of well-known Vedists. A. KAEGI's *Der Rig-Veda die älteste litteratur der Inder*[88] is a kind of general introduction to *ṚV*, and, in the matter of Vedic exegesis, conforms largely to the ideas of ROTH[89]. According to KAEGI, the majority of the hymns of *ṚV* which he characterises as 'the premier intellectual monument of our race', mainly comprise invocations and glorifications of deities which are, in most cases, personifications of natural phenomena. They are prayers to the Eternal Ones and constitute perhaps the best specimens of vigorous primeval poetry[90]. *Les religions de l'Inde* by A. BARTH[91] is a more solid work and contains many original ideas. BARTH has divided his book into two parts; in the first part he deals with the religion of the Veda, and in the second with Brahmanism, that is, with the ritual and the philosophical speculations and the decline of religion[92]. The Veda, according to this scholar, is pre-eminently a 'sacerdotal' literature—it can in no sense be called 'popular'. Not even in the oldest hymns can one discover primitive natural simplicity. BARTH further asserts that to speak of a 'Vedic people' as such is quite unwarranted. We cannot think in terms of any such specific people whose ideology is reflected in the Veda. The hymns of *ṚV* not only constitute just a portion of the great thesaurus of the 'ancient Aryan poems', but they do not even represent the entire religious poetry of the early Vedic age. An important point stressed by BARTH is that, at the time of the *ṚV*-hymns, side by side with the hierarchical Vedic religion, there must have also existed several popular religious cults—cults such as those out of which Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism arose in later times. Another point made by him is that, in *ṚV*, Varuṇa can by no means be said to appear in 'a state of decay' (as suggested by ROTH). BARTH also says—and quite rightly—that it will not be proper for one to seek to discover profound thought in every hymn of *ṚV*. In this connection, he declares that the Vedic poets often 'strive to be unintelligible' and manifest 'affectation and indolence'[93].

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[88] Leipzig, 1878–79.

[89] The German translation of *Seventy Hymns of ṚV*, prepared by KAEGI and GELDNER, clearly belongs to the school of ROTH.

[90] H. ZIMMER, who also faithfully followed ROTH, described (1879) the Vedic people as "a people, young and full of confidence in their gods, used to modesty, morality, and respect for women". About the poetry of *ṚV*, BRUNNHOFER says: "The poetry of *ṚV* is the integral poetry of a man of nature *par excellence*; it is the lark's song of humanity which was wide awake and conscious of its grandeur".

[91] Paris, 1879. An English translation of this work by WOOD was published in 1882. Attention may be drawn also to BARTH's other writings, particularly those published in *Revue Critique*, wherein he refers to Indian religions (specially Vedic).

[92] The title of BARTH's book is, accordingly, not quite apt.

[93] A reviewer of BARTH's book pertinently asks: Is the obscurity of some portions of the Veda the result of a purposeful affectation of mystery on the part of the Vedic *ṛṣis* or of our own imperfect knowledge of the Vedic idiom and the Vedic way of thinking?

More or less following in the wake of **Bergaigne** and **Barth**, P. **Regnaud** presents a new system of the interpretation of *ṚV*[94]. He starts with the assumption that the post-*ṚV* literature and the Indian commentaries are quite misleading so far as the correct understanding of *ṚV* is concerned. He also discards the interpretations of most of the Western Vedists[95]. He asserts that the hymns of *ṚV* contain neither the invocations to gods nor any mythology of gods, but that, almost exclusively and in ever newer variations, they describe sacrificial ritual. This does not, of course, mean that they deal with the details of any specific sacrifice, but sacrifice in general is invariably their main concern. They speak mainly of Agni and Soma, which latter, according to **Regnaud**, is not a drink prepared from the juice of some plant, but an oil or a spirituous liquid with which the sacrificial fire is nourished. Trying to determine the meanings of the words of *ṚV* through etymology, **Regnaud** offers absolutely new interpretation of many Vedic hymns. For instance, he says that the two hymns to Uṣas (*ṚV* I. 123, 124), the translation of which he has given in his monograph, do not celebrate the natural phenomena of the sun and the dawn, but that, under these symbols, they describe the sacrificial offering, the flame of Agni, and the flaming and inflammable liquid, Soma. Similarly, in connection with his translation of *ṚV* IV. 26 and 27, he gives his own interpretation of the myth of the advent of Soma[96]. By and large, **Regnaud**'s approach to the Veda may be said to have been oriented by three assumptions, namely, that there is a complete break of tradition between *ṚV* and the later Sanskrit literature[97], that, so for as *ṚV* is concerned, the readings are certain, the vocabulary uncertain, and the contents for the most part not properly understood, and that (and this is particularly important) a large majority of Vedic words mean ' nourishment ', ' sacrificial offering '[98]. In support of this last assumption, **Regnaud** shows, by means of his peculiar etymologising, that *āji* does not mean ' battle ', but that it is connected with *ājya* and means ' nourishment '. Similarly, *pṛṣṭha* does not mean ' back ' but liquid ; *pṛthivī* is the sacrificial liquid which ' widens ' in the course of its flow, and *dyauḥ* is the ' libation '. The ascription of such meanings to various Vedic words is obviously intended to confirm the hypothesis that *ṚV* is essentially a Veda of sacrifice.

E. W. **Hopkins** has himself confessed that in writing his book[99] he had not desired ' to compete with **Barth**'s well-known book under the same title '. However, it must be conceded that the scope of the work of **Hopkins** is larger than that of BARTH. HOPKINS first deals with the sources and methods and then gives a general description of India. He follows this with a statement (but not a critical discussion) about the pantheon of Vedic divinities and about the Brahmanic ritual and the Upaniṣadic speculations. The concluding part of his book is devoted to the consideration of popular Brahmanism, the *Gṛhya-Sūtras*, and the *Dharma-Sūtras*. HOPKINS's treatment of Vedic gods is conservative and cautious so far as the different schools of Vedic interpretation are concerned. He divides these gods into three classes—'upper', 'middle', and 'lower'. This classification is obviously too vague, and cannot be said to be warranted by the facts of the Veda. Indeed, this entire section of HOPKINS's book betrays a lack of definite criteria on the part of the author. His treatment of the Vedic ritual also is deficient in the sense that many significant concepts and practices have not found adequate exposition at his hands. HOPKINS does not have any specific theory of his own regarding the Vedic religion, nor does he present that religion in its historical development. He is conscious of the various problems arising out of the complex nature of the Vedic religion[100], but he seems to fight shy of tackling them squarely. Compared to HOPKINS's book, E. HARDY's *Die vedische-brahmanische Periode der Religion des alten Indiens*[101], which was published a couple of years before, may be said to contain a little fuller and more systematic treatment of the Vedic religion[102]. HARDY deals with the Vedic gods under different categories such as the sun and the moon gods; Varuṇa; Agni, Soma, Indra; the rain and the wind gods; newer divinities; and genii, demons, and spirits. He has also devoted a few sections to the consideration of legends, sacrificial rites, religious practices, and theosophy. But even HARDY's book is of the nature of a straightforward statement rather than of a critical exposition.

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[94] *Le Rig-Vèda et les origines de la mythologie indo-européenne*, Paris, 1892.

[95] In **Regnaud**'s opinion, only **Bergaigne**'s researches show some distinct progress. **Regnaud** severely criticises those who are inclined to underestimate the antiquity and importance of *ṚV*.

[96] Of course, he differs from **Kuhn** in most of the details.

[97] Classical Sanskrit vocabulary, he says, if not altogether worthless, is at least misleading for the *ṚV*-exegesis.

[98] In this context, one is reminded of V. K. **Rajwade** who sought to prove that a majority of Vedic nouns meant ' wealth ' and a majority of Vedic verbs meant ' to give '.

[99] *The Religions of India*, Boston, 1895.

The real compeers of BERGAIGNE in the field of Vedic religious and mythological studies and research are Alfred HILLEBRANDT and Hermann OLDENBERG. Like BERGAIGNE, HILLEBRANDT also firmly believed that the Vedic mythology and Vedic ritual were essentially inseparable. The extension of the Vedic mythology to the Vedic cult was a vital feature of his work[103]. His study of the Vedic ritual was very deep—perhaps deeper than that of BERGAIGNE. He was thus eminently equipped for the task which he had undertaken, but his expert knowledge of the Vedic ritual itself proved—not unoften—a serious handicap so far as a balanced estimate of the Vedic mythology was concerned[104]. A prominent characteristic of HILLEBRANDT's methodology was a philological interpretation of the Vedic texts. He sought to interpret the Veda as much as possible from itself. He insisted on the essential distinction between Vedic and classical Sanskrit being properly appreciated. As for Pali, he felt sure that it would not help much in the understanding of the Vedic mythology. As a matter of fact, Pali had, according to him, already caused a good deal of misunderstanding. It was HILLEBRANDT's contention that *ṚV* necessarily contained much that could not be called 'Indian'. He said that, on the assumption of a restricted Indian provenance of *ṚV*, much of it would remain unintelligible. A considerable portion of *ṚV* had its origin outside India. For instance, the eighth *maṇḍala* showed unmistakable traces of the lands lying to the west and to the north of India. In this sense, *ṚV* had to be regarded as being more akin to the *Avesta* than to classical Sanskrit literature. HILLEBRANDT sought very little help from comparative mythology. Similarly he was exceedingly wary in accepting the validity of etymology in mythological matters. Etymology, even if correct (and one could not be too sure of its correctness!), was mythologically useless because the meaning which it furnished was so general that it might designate a number of different things and consequently give no clue to the individual character of the god in question[105]. A reference may be made here also to HILLEBRANDT's confidence in his own methods and conclusions regarding the Vedic mythology. In spite of the severe criticisms and discussions of the theories which he had set forth in the first edition of his *Vedische Mythologie*, he did not think it necessary to revise any of them substantially in the second edition which was published a quarter of a century after the first.

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[100] This is indicated by his *India Old and New.*

[101] (nach den Quellen dargestellt), Munster, 1893.

[102] Reference may be made here also to HARDY's *Indische Religionsgeschichte*, Leipzig, 1898.

[103] *Vedische Mythologie*, 3 volumes, Breslau, 1891, 1899, and 1902; second edition (in 2 volumes), 1927 and 1929.

[104] It was said that HILLEBRANDT did not possess the brilliance of BERGAIGNE and OLDENBERG, nor perhaps the extreme critical acumen of PISCHEL and GELDNER, but that he possessed a most excellent capacity of common sense.

HILLEBRANDT adopted the view that most of the Vedic gods were personifications of natural phenomena. He believed that there was 'general agreement among Vedic scholars as to the necessity of deriving most of the old Indian deities from physical phenomena', but he was also aware that there was considerable difference of opinion among scholars about the specific natural phenomenon which a particular god was supposed to represent[106]. Further he was quite definite that the mythological materials in *ṚV* did not warrant the recognition of any abstract deities[107], or of any euhemeristic traces. Ancestor-worship, he further said, had certainly been one side of ancient mythology, but it was not the only or even the most prominent one. The great lights of heaven, which regulated the course of time, created the summer and the winter, and dispelled the darkness of night, could not have influenced the mind of the primitive man less than the belief in the power of the deceased or in malign spirits. HILLEBRANDT pointed out that the Vedic Aryans, whether herdsmen or husbandmen, were not entirely troglodytes;

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[105] P. von BRADKE once wrote: "Mythological and etymological hypotheses can be good servants, but they are bad masters".

[106] The simple formula of the earlier periods was: Vedic gods personified natural phenomena. As to which natural phenomena they personified was to be determined on the basis of the etymologies of their names.

[107] OLDENBERG was a firm believer in the existence of such deities in *ṚV*.

they felt more than we did the influence of these forces which governed their daily life—the sun and the moon, the storm and the weather. Fetishism too, according to him, must be assigned but a very limited share in the Vedic mythology.

HILLEBRANDT interpreted the Indra-Vṛtra myth as reflecting the conflict between the demon of winter (Vṛtra) and the sun of the spring season (Indra). He further pointed out that the Vedic tribes must have brought this myth to India from far away. He did not accept the theory that Indra was a rain-god and Vṛtra a cloud-demon. According to him, clouds did not play any significant role in *ṚV*. Varuṇa was, for him (as for OLDENBERG), the moon-god, but he completely rejected OLDENBERG's other observations about the Varuṇa-mythology[108]. Aditi meant imperishableness, and not omnipresence or infinitude. According to HILLEBRANDT, *brahman* meant ' growth ', and Bṛhaspati-Brahmaṇaspati was the lord of growth (that is, growth of plants)—the moon. Indra, he added in this connection, was the Kṣatriya among the gods and had developed from the physical phenomenon of the spring sun into a god-warrior; Bṛhaspati was the heavenly Brâhmaṇa and *purohita* and took his origin from the moon as the presiding deity of the Brâhmaṇas[109]. The most striking feature of HILLEBRANDT's exposition of the Vedic mythology is his assumption of the unique spiritual character imputed by the Vedic poets to the moon. Indeed, he went to the extent of asserting that the moon was the very centre of the Vedic religious ideology[110]. In the Indian belief, the sun occupied but a subordinate position. HILLEBRANDT firmly maintained that, in the Veda, Soma was and had always been identical with the moon, the heavenly well of *amṛta*[111]. He insisted that the equation, Soma=the moon, held good in every one of the Vedic contexts. He stoutly defended his lunar theory against various attacks. When, for instance, it was argued that the reference in *ṚV* to the ' roaring ' of Soma would go against his lunar theory, he instantly retorted that there was nothing to be surprised at in such a reference, for, certain primitive peoples did actually speak of the moon as ' roaring '[112]. A major part of HILLEBRANDT's writings was devoted to the reiteration that Soma, as the moon, dominated the entire Vedic religion and mythology. Later on, he slightly modified this assertion by stating that, with Agni, Soma dominated the Vedic thought. But even Agni was, according to him, an aspect of the moon. The same natural phenomenon underlay the conceptions of Agni and Bṛhaspati—in one case the fire-form of the moon and in the other the nectar-form of the moon[113]. The aerial Agni was the moon, so was Apām Napāt the moon. HILLEBRANDT was of the view that *RV* knew the three *śrauta* fires : the *āhavanīya* was connected with Sūrya and the heaven, the *gārhapatya* with the terrestrial Agni and the earth, and the *dakṣiṇa* with the aerial Agni and the mid-region. He further suggested that the semi-circular shape of the fire-place for the *dakṣiṇa* fire clearly symbolised the moon[114]. Incidentally, it may be pointed out, at this stage, that HILLEBRANDT did not accept the threefold classification of the Vedic gods into celestial, atmospheric, and terrestrial. He thought that, though such classification was useful from the practical point of view, it was open to several theoretical objections. For one thing, the limits between these classes would be constantly shifting in accordance with the varying interpretation of the characters of the gods. About Rudra, HILLEBRANDT said that he was neither the chief of the souls of the dead nor the lord of the mountains, but that he was the god of the hot and rainy season which was the most dangerous time of the year in India. Uṣas, according to HILLEBRANDT, was not only the dawn of the single day, but she also personified the beginning of the year. Uṣas represented the commencement of the ritual year and Rudra its conclusion[115]. Sūryā was a mythological synonym of Uṣas; she was not the sun in female form. In a sense, Saramā also was mythologically equivalent to Uṣas. In the *Atharvaveda*, Uṣas was represented as Virāj whose two calves rose out of the sea and who was brought into connection with sacrifice.

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[108] See the sequel.

[109] HILLEBRANDT refers, in this connection, to the statement : *candramā manaso jātaḥ*.

[110] This is why HILLEBRANDT is often referred to as the ' Moon-mythologist '.

[111] Soma was originally the name of a ritual plant, the juice of which was used in Vedic sacrifice. Its localization in and identification with the moon is obviously an afterthought. HILLEBRANDT, on the other hand, suggested that the plant was a symbolical representation of the luminary.

[112] Presumably, however, the roaring of Soma has to be regarded as a hyperbolical description of the sound of the flowing Soma-juice.

HILLEBRANDT believed that anthropology often offered the most essential kind of aid to the understanding of Vedic mythology and ritual[116]. Particularly in the Vedic ritual could be discovered remnants of the primitive way of thought and life[117]. Speaking of the sacrifice to Jumbaka in connection with the *avabhṛtha* in *aśvamedha*, for instance, HILLEBRANDT pointed out that, in that sacrifice, in conjunction with the Śunaḥśepa-legend, we had a relic of the primitive practice of slaying the aged and worn-out king at stated intervals. In another connection, he asserted that human sacrifice was the source of *RV* X.18.8; 85.21–22. Had human sacrifice not been an actual fact, the Brāhmaṇas would not have preserved a record of it. As for animal sacrifice, HILLEBRANDT stated that, in the selection or avoidance of certain animals for sacrifice, no trace of totemism or theriomorphism could be found[118]. He further said that the Indian conception of sacrifice was opposed to the Semitic in so far as the latter was an act of communion in which god and worshipper joined in partaking of the flesh of the animal[119].

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[113] It may be pointed out that, in the first edition of his work, HILLEBRANDT had discussed Bṛhaspati in the Soma-section; in the second, he discussed Bṛhaspati in the Agni-section.

[114] HILLEBRANDT also suggested that the square of the *āhavanīya* fire-place indicated the heaven, and the circle of the *gārhapatya* fire-place the earth. Incidentally, according to HILLEBRANDT, the Aṅgirases were a real historical family associated with the fire-cult.

[115] The cows of Uṣas, HILLEBRANDT believed, did not mean the morning clouds in *ṚV*.

[116] Accordingly, he drew considerably upon the works of TYLOR, FRAZER, MANNHARDT, LONG, and WILKIN.

[117] At the back of the Vedic priest there always lurked the primitive magician-medicineman.

OLDENBERG's *Die Religion des Veda*[120] certainly constitutes one of the most remarkable contributions to the study of Vedic religion and mythology. This book falls into two main parts—the first deals with the Vedic mythology and the second with the Vedic cult. Like BERGAIGNE, OLDENBERG fully realises the importance of the Vedic ritual for the proper understanding of the Vedic religion as a whole[121]. He says that, without the background of the Vedic ritual, all discussion about the Vedic religion will lack the essential local colour. As for the scope of OLDENBERG's work, while BERGAIGNE has restricted himself only to the hymns of *ṚV*, OLDENBERG covers the whole field of Vedic literature, for, he believes that the literature immediately following *ṚV* deals with the same sacrificial ritual for which the hymns of *ṚV* are composed. OLDENBERG generally adheres to the naturalistic interpretation of the Vedic mythology. He says that the higher gods, that is to say, those gods which are not of a semi-divine or fetishistic nature[122], of the Vedic, and certainly also of the IE period, are without exception the deified representations of the entities in nature or of the forces which are active in the great phenomena of nature. He, however, hastens to sound a note of warning against the acceptance of the simple formula to which the earlier schools of naturalists had reduced their views in this connection. It is necessary to remember, he adds, that, between the prototype of nature (wherever such a one exists) and its mythological counterpart, manifold and complex developments take place. There are changes in the proportions of individual constituent elements; there is a fading up or even an outright disappearance of some elements; and there is the penetration of new elements. There also occurs, in many cases, the filling in of empty forms with new contents[123]. These and similar other developments sometimes make the recognition of the correct naturalistic basis of a mythological concept almost impossible. OLDENBERG further points out that, besides the naturalistic aspect of the Vedic mythology, there exists another equally significant aspect of it, namely, the deification of abstract concepts. OLDENBERG also accepts, albeit in a restricted sense, the methods of comparative mythology. He insists that the attempt to trace individual Vedic gods back to their IE forms is certainly not unwarranted. He, however, cautions that one must free oneself from the realm of mere etymology and pass into the free atmosphere of reality. Similarly one can ill afford to ignore the dimension of historical perspective. The Vedic religion is essentially an Indian religion. But, at the same time, it is related very closely to the ancient Iranian religion and less closely to other IE religious traditions[124]. The larger anthropological and ethnological factors have also played a significant part in the development of that religion.

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[118] *Tiere und Goetter*, p. 5.

[119] OLDENBERG and HOPKINS seem to agree with HILLEBRANDT in this view, while KEITH differs from him.

[120] Berlin, 1894; second ed., 1917; third ed., 1923.

[121] OLDENBERG points out that, in the history of Vedic philology, Vedic mythology came to the forefront before Vedic cult and religion.

[122] OLDENBERG believes that Aditi, as conceived in *ṚV* is derived from a 'cow-fetish.'

[123] OLDENBERG speaks in this connection of primary or older elements, which are preserved better in ritual than in poetry, and secondary or newer elements which lead to the ascription to the gods of incidental character such as that of 'bringers of light' or 'upholders of the cosmic order'.

OLDENBERG has put forth in his writings a number of original ideas and theories about Vedic religion and mythology. A reference will, however, be made here only to the more important ones from among them. One of such theories relates to the Varuṇa-mythology. OLDENBERG begins by pointing out that Varuṇa, Mitra, and Ādityas constitute a homogeneous mythological unit in the Veda. This unit corresponds, in almost all respects, with the Avestan mythological unit comprising Ahura Mazdah, Mithra, and Amesha Spentas. The ancient Iranian Mithra is universally recognised as the sun-god. Consequently his Vedic counterpart, Mitra, also must be regarded as representing the sun. Arguing further in this vein OLDENBERG suggests that Varuṇa, who is often associated with Mitra very closely but as being operative in a sphere opposite to that in which Mitra operates[125], has to be regarded as representing the moon[126]. It would then naturally follow that Ādityas represent the planets[127]. The other point made by OLDENBERG in connection with the Varuṇa-mythology is still more striking. He points out that Varuṇa, Mitra, and Ādityas are specifically Indo-Iranian divinities, that they do not have counterparts in other IE mythologies. At the same time, the Indo-Iranians already had a sun-god (Sūrya) and a moon-god (Candramas) endowed with more distinct characters. It is, therefore, suggested that the Indo-Iranians must have borrowed the conception of the additional sun-god (Mitra) and moon-god (Varuṇa) from some neighbouring people. These people, it may be surmised, were the Akkadians (the Babylonians) who were particularly interested in the planets[128] and presumably had in their mythology a compact group of gods representing the sun, the moon, and the planets. Two other considerations would, according to OLDENBERG, seem to confirm this surmise: firstly, that the Akkadians speak of their moon-god exactly as the Vedic Indians speak of Varuṇa; and, secondly, that an ethical god like Varuṇa can have been borrowed by the Indo-Iranians from a people like the Akkadians who had adopted an ethical way of life before the Indo-Europeans[129].

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[124] OLDENBERG criticises PISCHEL and GELDNER for having completely overlooked this point.

[125] Such as day and night, white and black, light and darkness, etc.

[126] OLDENBERG rejects the identification of Varuṇa with Ouranos. Identifications based on phonetic similarities, he says, tend to force together concepts which are totally disconnected.

[127] Correspondingly, Ahura Mazdah is the moon-good, and Amesha Spentas the planets.

[128] The Vedic and the Avestan Aryans originally had very little interest in the planets,

Another special contribution of OLDENBERG's to the study of the Vedic mythology is his assumption regarding the existence in *ṚV* of what may be called abstract divinities. The deities in *ṚV* which admit of being regarded as abstractions are of three types: (1) deities resulting from purely allegorical personifications of abstract ideas like Manyu and Śraddhā[130]; (2) deities, in whose case the attributes or epithets are transformed into individual names, such as Prajāpati, Bṛhaspati, etc.[131]; and (3) deities, whose names originate from the particular spheres of their activities—each such name having the form of a *nomen agentis*, like Savitṛ (impeller), Viṣṇu (wanderer), Tvaṣṭṛ (fashioner), and Pūṣan (nourisher). As has been already pointed out, HILLEBRANDT takes a strong objection to OLDENBERG's conception of abstract divinities. He says that they do not seem to be the gods of a rational and realistic people. He caustically observes that such divinities would show that the Vedic poets worked not in nature but in a study-room.

According to OLDENBERG, Indra is a storm-god who bears certain pre-Indian features. He emphasises the point that, in *ṚV*, Indra is nowhere spoken of as 'raining'. He agrees with HILLEBRANDT's observation that clouds as such do not play any great rôle in that Veda. OLDENBERG accordingly thinks that the *ṚV*-poets understood the release of waters by Indra not as the release of celestial waters but as the setting free of terrestrial waters from terrestrial mountains. He explains Indra's winning of light metaphorically as 'the attainment of bright goods after overcoming terrible dangers'[132]. OLDENBERG accepts the identification of Parjanya with Perkunas and suggests that that god definitely goes back to the IE period. For him, Apām Napāt does not personify lightning; he rather personifies 'the fire in all water, especially rivers and ponds'. Similarly, Rudra is not the storm-god; he is a demon of disease coming from forest and mountain, like Mars Silvanus. OLDENBERG, following MANNHARDT, regards Aśvinau as representing the morning star and the evening star. He points out, in support of this assumption, that the morning star is the only light beside the morning fire, the dawn, and the sun, that the time of Aśvinau, their luminous nature, and their course around the heavens are applicable to the star, that the star of the evening is naturally associated with the morning star, and that the evidence of comparative mythology favours such an assumption[133]. As for Soma, OLDENBERG severely criticises HILLEBRANDT's view that, throughout *ṚV*, Soma stands for the moon. He has no doubt that, in a large majority of passages, Soma clearly personifies a specific ritual plant and its juice. The identification of Soma with the moon begins to occur only in later literature. In *ṚV*, the moon is nowhere said to be the food of gods. In *ṚV* X. 85, the lunar character of Soma is referred to as a secret known only to the Brāhmaṇas. This would show that such character was but incipient. In some cases, again, the identification of Soma and the moon has to be regarded just as the result of poetic imagery.

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[129] OLDENBERG lays great stress on the conspicuous contrast between Indra, who is a truly IE god, and Varuṇa, who is adopted by the Indo-Iranians from a Semitic people.

[130] These are scanty in *ṚV*, but are developed in later *Saṁhitās*.

[131] Bṛhaspati-Brahmaṇaspati is, according to OLDENBERG, the celestial embodiment of priesthood.

[132] MACDONELL observes that OLDENBERG explains one point too literally and another too figuratively.

OLDENBERG also adversely criticises MAX MUELLER's theory of henotheism, that is to say, the theory of 'the Vedic belief in individual gods alternately regarded as the highest'[134]. He points out that, on the one hand, hymns addressed to Viśve Devas are frequent, in which all deities, even the lesser ones, are praised in succession, and, on the other, the technical priest cannot but have known the exact relative position of each god in the Soma-ritual, for which the great mass of Vedic hymns are composed and which includes the worship of almost the entire pantheon. Henotheism is, therefore, rather an appearance than a reality. The indefiniteness of outline in the Vedic gods and the natural exaggeration of the poet-priest in extolling the attributes of the god he is addressing seem to have been the main factors operative in this connection.

OLDENBERG's discussion of the Vedic ritual is quite illuminating. In the course of this discussion he has profusely drawn upon anthropological and ethnological materials. He points out that the Vedic ritual indicates predominantly the benevolent character of the principal Vedic gods[135]. The oldest Vedic ritual, he states, knows of seven priests with distinct functions —the *brahman* priest having been non-existent in the oldest portions of *ṚV*[136]. Comparatively speaking, the element of thanksgiving is mostly absent in Vedic sacrifice[137]. Similarly the magical element also is not very conspicuous in the early Vedic ritual[138]. The Vedic people, however, had in their ritual the rite of initiation (*dīkṣā*) in common with the most diverse primitive peoples. The object of this rite was to bring about an intercourse between the sacrificer and the gods by inducing a kind of ecstatic condition. OLDENBERG recognises the existence of only certain traces of human sacrifice in the Vedic ritual, as, for instance, in the rite connected with the *agnicayana*, wherein man is one of the five sacrificial victims. However, the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* already refers to the human sacrifice as a thing of the past, and substitutes are already seen to have begun to be employed. As has been pointed out elsewhere, OLDENBERG agrees with HILLEBRANDT in assuming that the Indian conception of sacrifice is opposed to the Semitic in so far as the latter is an act of communion in which god and worshipper join in partaking of the flesh of the animal[139].

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[133] Incidentally, OLDENBERG refers to the possibility of Aśvins having been originally represented as horses.

[134] This theory is rejected also by WHITNEY and HOPKINS among others.

[135] Occasions like the warding off of the malevolent Rudra are, according to him, rare.

[136] He adds that the *Avesta* knows of eight priests, the Zaotar being the chief amongst them. The sacerdotal actions of the Vedic and the Avestan priests are to a large extent similar.

[137] OLDENBERG points out that there is no proper word for 'thanks' in the Vedic language (indeed, even in Sanskrit).

[138] This element became prominent in the *Brāhmaṇas* where the priest came to be looked upon as more important than the divinity. OLDENBERG regarded sacrifice and magic as two originally separate spheres which were mixed up in course of time. The *dakṣiṇa* fire, according to him, comprised the features of both the magic fire and the ritual fire.

A distinguished English contemporary of HILLEBRANDT and OLDENBERG was Arthur A. MACDONELL. The nature and extent of MACDONELL's famous book, *Vedic Mythology*[140], were perhaps determined, to a certain extent, by the series in which it was published, namely, "Grundriss der indo-arischen Philologie und Altertumskunde". As required by the Grundriss, MACDONELL's *Vedic Mythology* is characterised by a careful and intelligent collation and lucid exposition of all relevant material relating to the subject. In this book, the author has attempted a detailed but discerning statement about Vedic gods and heroes entirely on the basis of original texts. Accordingly, as was expected, the book constitutes a most valuable source-book for the study of the Vedic mythology[141]. MACDONELL begins by stating the general problems connected with Vedic religion and mythology and outlining the method to be pursued in tackling those problems. He then makes a few observations regarding the Vedic conception of the world and its origin. Then comes the main part of the book embodying the description of the Vedic gods who are considered under various categories, such as celestial gods, atmospheric gods, terrestrial gods, abstract divinities, goddesses, dual divinities, groups of divinities, and lower divinities. This is followed by sections dealing with priests and heroes, animals and objects, demons, and eschatology. So far as the description of the Vedic gods is concerned, MACDONELL first gives the characteristic features of each god, independent of any critical interpretation, and then adds at the end a very brief review of the different views which have been put forth by scholars in connection with the personality and character of that particular god. It will be seen from the scheme of MACDONELL's book, as set forth above, that, in his treatment of the Vedic mythology, the author, unlike BERGAIGNE, HILLEBRANDT, and OLDENBERG, has kept aside the subject of Vedic ritual almost entirely. His classification of the Vedic gods, most of whom he regards as personifications of natural powers and phenomena, is far too schematic, and, though perhaps useful from the practical point of view, is theoretically not sound. Again, in his book, MACDONELL has not sought either to enunciate any original theories of his own or to subject to a critical examination the theories of other scholars. Altogether, his book is essentially 'retrospective' in character.

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[139] Incidentally, reference may be made here to two more points: Firstly OLDENBERG does not doubt the existence of totemism in the Vedic religion. He further suggests that, in view of the existence of totemism also in Greece and Italy, totemism must be regarded as IE. Secondly, he thinks (in opposition to ROTH) that *ṚV* refers, though indirectly, to a belief in hell.

[140] Strassburg, 1897.

[141] In a sense, MACDONELL's work is comparable to MUIR's *OST*, vol. 5.

It is, however, possible to derive some of MACDONELL's salient views on the various aspects of the Vedic mythology from his other writings and critical reviews. For instance, he took strong objection to OLDENBERG's suggestion that the waters released by Indra were understood by the Vedic poets to have been the terrestrial waters set free from the terrestrial mountains. MACDONELL felt certain that the Indra-Vṛtra fight basically reflected an atmospheric phenomenon, and that by the waters set free by Indra were meant the waters released from the clouds. Indra was the rain-god, and, though he was nowhere in *ṚV* referred to as 'raining', the stereotyped mythological terms used to describe the phenomenon hardly left any doubt about the character of that god. At the basis of the identification of Varuṇa with Ouranos, MACDONELL saw not only a phonetic equation but also a fundamental equation of conceptions. He hesitated to accept the suggested correspondence between the Vedic Ādityas and the Avestan Amesha Spentas[142]. He pointed out that OLDENBERG's theory that Ādityas personified the seven planets was not at all convincing. For one thing, number seven was scarcely characteristic of Ādityas—not more than six were mentioned in *ṚV*, while in the *Atharvaveda* eight Ādityas were mentioned. Incidentally, he asserted that the moon had always been regarded in India a lesser divinity than the sun[143]. Accordingly, the great Asura Varuṇa could hardly be said to have personified the moon. MACDONELL found HILLEBRANDT's suggestion that Soma was the moon-god throughout *ṚV* too dogmatic. Soma originally personified the ritual plant, and, even in his subsequent cosmic aspect, he was more akin to the sun than to the moon. In *ṚV*, he was described in words applicable to the sun and was never expressly connected with the moon. How was it, MACDONELL asked, that none of the Vedic commentators, in whose time Soma and the moon were believed to be one, ever mentioned that Soma was the moon-god also in *ṚV*? The later identification of Soma with the moon, according to him, went hand in hand with the separation of the world of gods associated with the sun from the world of Pitars connected with the moon. Bṛhaspati, MACDONELL pointed out, was originally an epithet representing sacerdotal side of Agni's nature, which had already at the beginning of the *ṚV*-period acquired an independent character. He, therefore, regarded Bṛhaspati as a terrestrial divinity. There was no doubt that Apām Napāt was connected with lightning. Referring to OLDENBERG's suggestion that Apām Napāt was 'the fire in all water, especially in rivers and ponds', MACDONELL asked how such 'extinguished' fire could 'shine forth' and that too in the highest place. He did not also agree with HILLEBRANDT who had suggested that the semi-circular shape of the fire-place of the *dakṣiṇa* fire symbolised the moon. According to him, it rather denoted the arch of the mid-region[144]. MACDONELL was inclined to accept GOLDSTUECKER's view that Aśvins represented the inseparable duality of light and darkness which constituted the morning twilight [145]. Savitṛ was clearly the sun-god. MACDONELL took OLDENBERG to task for having unnecessarily inverted the probable order of the evolution of the personality of that god by suggesting that Savitṛ originally represented a pure abstraction, but later attracted a large body of solar traits. HILLEBRANDT's characterisation of Rudra as the god of the most dangerous season of the year did not accord with the Ṛgvedic mode of thought. Nor could one accept OLDENBERG's comparison of Rudra with Mars Silvanus. Maruts were the children of Rudra. How could Rudra's character be so different from that of his children? MACDONELL thought that the evidence of *ṚV* was not sufficient to indicate what natural substratum Rudra represented. It would, however, appear that Rudra was the storm-god in whom the baleful nature of lightning was prominent, as against its action which was wholly beneficial to man in the case of Indra. MACDONELL further pointed out that one widely diffused primitive conception which the Indo-Europeans must have inherited from an earlier stage was the notion of heaven and earth having been the universal parents.

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[142] ROTH suggested this correspondence; SPIEGEL doubted it. WINDISCHMANN regarded the conception of Amesha Spentas as of purely Iranian origin.

[143] **MACDONELL seems to have belonged to the 'solar' school of MAX MUELLER.**

If, through his *Vedic Mythology*, MACDONELL provides a fairly comprehensive and useful catalogue of facts about the Vedic mythology, Maurice BLOOMFIELD, in his *The Religion of the Veda*[146], presents a very readable account of the development of the Vedic religion from *ṚV* to the *Upaniṣads*. BLOOMFIELD deals in his lectures[147] with such topics as India the land of religions, the priestly religion, the pre-historic gods of India, and the beginnings of Hindu theosophy, and his exposition is uniformly clear and consistent. His general attitude towards the interpretation of the Vedic mythology is said to be one of wise conservatism. This becomes evident in his third lecture wherein under the title "The Pre-historic Gods of India", he has treated of Vedic and IE mythology. He sticks to the identification of Varuṇa with Ouranos, in spite of the lunar theories newly advocated by HILLEBRANDT and OLDENBERG. It may, however, be pointed out that BLOOMFIELD seems to agree with HILLEBRANDT in his assumption that, in *ṚV*, Soma uniformly personifies the moon-god, though he rejects that scholar's suggestion that the worship of the moon dominates the religious thought of *ṚV*. He is also not inclined to accept HILLEBRANDT's interpretation of the Indra-Vṛtra myth as reflecting the conflict between the winter-demon and the spring-sun. BLOOMFIELD favours the methods of comparative mythology and refers with approval to such equations as Sārameyau = Cerberus. He does not find any clear traces of totemism in the Veda, though he thinks that some of the Vedic gods may have been originally represented in the form of animals, which later became the vehicles of those gods. In this connection he suggests that Aśvins were presumably reckoned as flamingos.

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[144] Incidentally, MACDONELL believed that Aṅgirases were demi-gods.

[145] The morning star and the evening star, with which OLDENBERG identified Aśvins, could hardly be regarded as a pair in the sense in which Aśvins formed an inseparable pair.

[146] New York, 1908.

[147] The book consists of the lectures delivered by BLOOMFIELD in 1906–07 as the seventh Series of American Lectures on the History of Religion.

BLOOMFIELD is rather reluctant to admit any 'settled intellectual religious consciousness' in *ṚV*. He is aware that, while singing of the wonderful achievements of their gods, the poets of *ṚV* do grow truly warm and feel their theme—that sometimes they are really carried away by it—, but he does not believe that 'either the greatness and majesty or the incomprehensibleness of the gods have produced a permanent impression of their superiority and perfection'. He further points out that the so-called 'henotheism' in *ṚV* does not have quite the true ring—it is perfunctory. God after god is glorified as the highest, 'they each in turn establish the heavens and the earth, they start the sun on his course, almost indifferently well'. It would, however, seem that it was the rotation of the gods in the Vedic ritual, rather than the forgetfulness of the virtues of the preceding god, which was at the bottom of henotheism. Henotheism, says BLOOMFIELD, is "polytheism grown cold in service, and unnice in its distinctions, leading to an opportunist monotheism in which every god takes hold of the sceptre and none keeps it". Two other significant points made by BLOOMFIELD in the course of his discussion of Vedic religion and philosophy relate respectively to the doctrine of the Ātman and the doctrine of Bhakti. He entirely discountenances the theory[148] that the Ātman-doctrine originated among the Kṣatriyas. He also holds that the Bhakti-ideology is fairly ancient in India and has grown side by side with and within the same circles of thought as the colder monism of the *Upaniṣads*. According to BLOOMFIELD, Yājñavalkya does not intend to expound to Maitreyī "the extremes of supersensual rationalism". In effect, the Upaniṣadic seer expresses the ideal of union with the supreme being, which is really the kernel of the doctrine of Bhakti. He wants to suggest that the knowledge of the Supreme is but a preparation for the love of God.

Leopold von SCHROEDER may be said to have revived the school of comparative mythology which had, to a certain extent, fallen into disrepute in the intervening period. His *Arische Religion*[149] does not contain much new material on the subject. There is evident in that book the same old tendency to advance mythological equations, often on the basis of bad etymologies. Trita Āptya is, for instance, identified with Athena Tritonis, Sārameya with

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[148] Sponsored by DEUSSEN, GARBE, and WINTERNITZ.

[149] Two volumes, Leipzig, 1914 and 1916.

Hermes, and Paṇis with Priam[150]. Apollo is said to be closely akin to Agni, while Aegis is understood to represent the dark thunder-cloud. However, SCHROEDER's earlier work[151] is more interesting from the point of view of Vedic folklore and popular religion. The central theme of the book is the so-called dialogue-hymns in *ṚV*. In these dialogue-hymns, SCHROEDER discovers the texts of ancient mysteries and mimes, relics of a drama which died out later (the later *Saṁhitās* and the *Brāhmaṇas* having nothing parallel to it) and which is not historically connected with the later drama though the latter sprang from the same roots[152]. He further connects these dramatic pieces with the Vedic vegetation-ritual. He finds clear traces of this latter in such myths as of Agastya and Lopāmudrā, Yama and Yamī, and Vṛṣākapi[153]. Similarly, according to SCHROEDER, Vedic Maruts show really characteristic features of an ancient vegetation-ritual. In this connection he points out that, in IE tribes, the youth among the people performed, at certain seasons of festival, dances at which arms were borne and in which the performers represented the souls of the dead.[154] SCHROEDER suggested that the decay of the ritual drama in Vedic times was due to the opposition of the priesthood to phallic ritual.

M. WINTERNITZ saw in *ṚV* a mythology in the making[155]. He believed that, in that Veda, originally, natural phenomena were glorified as such. Gradually these natural phenomena were transformed into mythological figures. The names of gods such as Indra, Varuṇa, etc., originally indicated certain natural phenomena and natural beings. In course of time, the epithets, which at first emphasized a particularly important side of a natural being, became god's names and new gods. One could thus see gods arising, as it were, before one's eyes. In his *Le Védisme*,[156] L. de LA VALLÉE POUSSIN contests this view of WINTERNITZ. He asserts that the Vedic mythology as represented in *ṚV* is already a fully accomplished fact—it is a system whose origins are already far past. He points out that the Vedic religion is of a very complex nature and would defy any attempt to reduce it to a simple formula. For instance, the peculiar ideology associated with Varuṇa cannot be logically derived from the simple myth of the sky by night. Similarly the ethical conception of *ṛta* cannot be derived merely from the observance of physical order. LA VALLÉE POUSSIN believes that, in this connection, the reminiscences of an ancient philosophy must have been operative. He further points out that the IE sky-god, Dyauḥ, cannot have been a primitive high god. According to him, the character of Rudra is made up of Aryan and Hindu elements. LA VALLÉE POUSSIN admits the presence of fetishism in the Vedic religion. The fetishistic use of animal and material objects in the Vedic ritual can by no means be denied. But such use need not be regarded as the most primitive. It will be seen that the sacrificer clearly distinguishes between the god and the temporary presence of the divine spirit in the animal or the instruments[157]. Incidentally, one of the interesting observations made by LA VALLÉE POUSSIN is that the *Atharvaveda*, with all its degradation, is an aristocratic Veda.

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[150] SCHROEDER finds in the legend of Troy a parallel to the myth of Saramā and Paṇis.

[151] *Mysterium und Mimus im Rigveda*, Leipzig, 1908.

[152] HERTEL and LEVI also find drama in these hymns and connect it with the later Sanskrit drama. SCHROEDER rejects the *ākhyāna*-theory of OLDENBERG.

[153] SCHROEDER believes that the Gandharvas and the Apsarases represent the genii of fecundity.

[154] SCHROEDER compares Maruts with Korybantes in Greece.

[155] *Geschichte der indischen Litteratur*, erster Band, Leipzig, 1908. Incidentally, WINTERNITZ has dedicated this volume to SCHROEDER.

[156] *Notions sur les religions de l' Inde : le védisme*, Paris, 1909.

An emphatically Indian orientation given to Vedic research—this was the most essential feature of the work of Richard PISCHEL and Karl F. GELDNER. It is clear from the major part of their writings[158] that these scholars were mainly occupied with Vedic exegesis rather than with Vedic mythology. But it must be remembered that the study of the Vedic mythology had developed hand in hand with Vedic word-philology and that, therefore, the two were almost inseparable. PISCHEL and GELDNER started with the firm belief that *ṚV* was an Indian, and exclusively an Indian, literature. Therefore, in order to understand *ṚV* adequately, one had to understand India thoroughly. Linguistics, which connected India's languages with the European languages, was a dangerous guide. It was necessary to recognise that the gulf between the earliest culture of the European Aryans and that of the Vedic age was such that no amount of phonetic equations could bridge it. The most dependable guide in the matter of the understanding of *ṚV* was the totality of the later Indian literature. For, in their thinking and feeling, the people of India had ever remained " basically an Indian people with an Indian spirit ". One could see them as such as clearly in the hymns of Vasiṣtha and Viśvāmitra as in the *Kādambarī* of Bāṇa. This attitude of PISCHEL and GELDNER obviously reflected a strong reaction against the work of comparative linguisticians and comparative mythologists—against, that is to say, the " international generalities " in which the scholars of the earlier periods had indulged. PISCHEL and GELDNER also represented a strong reaction against ROTH's school of Vedic interpretation, whose slogan was: Away from Sāyaṇa. These two scholars asserted equally vehemantly that Sāyaṇa had comprehended the true character of *ṚV* far more adequately than the European Vedists. They declared that the Veda—its language, its religion, and its moral ideas—must be interpreted with the help of the later Hindu literature. The key to the understanding of the Vedic literature was to be found in the critical analysis of the post-Vedic literature[159]. Indeed, these scholars sought to prove that beneath the words and phrases of *ṚV* lay ideas which subsequently "found expression in the *Brāhmaṇas*, the later religious hand-books, the epics, and even the *belles lettres* of the classical period".

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[157] LA VALLEE POUSSIN thinks (as against OLDENBERG) that the concept of Aditi in *ṚV* has not originated from a ' cow fetish. '

[158] Particularly *Vedische Studien*, 3 volumes, Stuttgart, 1889, 1892, 1901.

[159] Which ROTH and his school had contemptuously rejected from their purview.

As in Vedic exegesis so in Vedic mythology the main emphasis of PISCHEL and GELDNER was on the specifically Indian current of thought. The Vedic mythology, they said, must be expounded in the light of the later Indian mythology and not of IE mythological concepts. It was their contention that the entire mythology of *ṚV* manifested a distinctly Indian stamp. For an adequate understanding of the Vedic mythology, one had, therefore, to derive help from the classical Hindu mythology and even the contemporary Indian folk-religion[160]. Accordingly, PISCHEL and GELDNER maintained that the basic character of Varuṇa in *ṚV* was the same as that in the classical Hindu mythology, namely of the god of ocean[161]. Just as these two veterans rejected the extra-Indian emphasis of comparative linguistics and comparative mythology as well as the exegetical methods sponsored by ROTH, they also rejected the exclusively naturalistic interpretation of the Vedic mythology. For them, Aśvins did not personify any natural phenomena; they were rather two beneficent heroes of yore who came to be deified in course of time. It was a case of history being transformed into mythology. It had ever been the attempt of PISCHEL and GELDNER to present the Vedic mythology (indeed, the entire Vedic culture) as something living and tangible. They, therefore, sought to put flesh and blood into what had been reduced by some of the earlier Vedists to a dry-as-dust system. At the same time, they also wanted to put an end, once for all, to the false idealism which had developed in the earlier periods of the history of Vedic researches in the west. Accordingly, they did not mince words while speaking of the craftiness of the Vedic priests who tried to catch gods "like mouse with bacon". It was their view that *ṚV* revealed a fairly advanced culture. That culture was the result of a long previous development, which, they insisted, had been specifically Indian in character. And perhaps the most characteristic features of that culture were an infinite longing for wealth and a highly refined courtezan-life. Races and beautiful women were their chief interests—a tendency which could be seen to have persisted even in the classical times.

The reaction against the naturalistic interpretation of the Vedic mythology, which was reflected in the work of PISCHEL and GELDNER, seems to have become more pronounced in the subsequent periods. Sten KONOW, for instance, unequivocally declared in his *The Aryan Gods of the Mitani*

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[160] It may be pointed out in this context that A. LYALL actually finds in *ṚV* certain features of the living folk-religion of Central India.

[161] OLDENBERG strongly criticised (*Vedaforschung*) PISCHEL and GELDNER for their generally unhistorical approach. He pointed out that these two scholars completely ignored the lapse of time between ancient Aryandom and later Hinduism. Similarly, they underestimated the significance of the close affinity between the Vedic and the extra-Indian (particularly, ancient Iranian) languages and ideologies. While defining the character of Varuṇa in the light of the later Hindu mythology, they altogether lost sight of his essential 'Vedic' character.

People[162] that the conception of Vedic religion as a worship of nature and natural phenomena was fundamentally wrong[163]. Another tendency which had become prominent besides this anti-naturalism was the more marked awareness of the prevalence in the Vedic religion of what might be called the ideology of primitive magic. In this context, mention may be made of the marvellous work of W. CALAND. CALAND concerned himself more or less exclusively with a critical study of the literature and practices of the Vedic ritual. He fully realised that the Vedic ritual was for the most part a *Zauber-Ritual*, and that, in order adequately to understand that ritual, it was necessary to have a fair knowledge of the magic-ritual thought and practices of other primitive peoples. He specially stressed the point that, to be able to expound the Vedic ritual correctly, a philologist had to be a competent ethnologist and an ethnologist a qualified philologist. It was, however, not only in the Vedic ritual that the element of magic had been so conspicuous. The primitive magic-ideology dominated the Vedic mythology also. As typifying the two-fold tendency of anti-naturalism and emphasis on the magic-ideology may be mentioned Hermann GUENTERT's remarkable book, *Der arische Weltkönig und Heiland*[164]. This book is a veritable thesaurus of ingenious ideas and suggestions. GUENTERT seeks to investigate, mainly in the light of linguistics, the origin in the remotest prehistoric times, the growth and the transformations of certain religious and ethical concepts of the IE-speaking peoples. In a sense, his work pertains to the questions of historical semasiology. Making the gods of the Boghazköi tablet his starting point, GUENTERT traces the concepts underlying those gods westwards and eastwards[165], scrupulously steering himself clear of "Berliner comparative mythology" and "moon-mythology", and believes to be thereby able to define what he calls "a gradual and uninterruptedly ascending line of the evolution of the Aryan mythological thinking". The basic motif of this thinking is, according to him, that of magical bondage and release. This he tries to illustrate through a most illuminating and original discussion about the personality and character of Asura Varuṇa, the world-sovereign and cosmic magician. He shows how the various concepts connected with the Varuṇa-mythology, such as Mitra, *ṛta*, Aditi, Ādityas, *māyā*, and *pāśas*, as also the name Varuṇa itself, are linguistically derived from roots meaning "to bind". Further, in support of his theories, he produces a considerable amount of archaeological, anthropological, and ethnological evidence. In the second part of his book, GUENTERT deals with the Vedic saviour-gods and divine intermediaries, among whom he chiefly counts Aśvins, Viṣṇu, and Agni. He also stresses the cosmogonical significance of the self-immolation of Yama.

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[162] Christiania, 1921.

[163] KONOW thinks that the gods mentioned on the Boghazkoei tablet are Indian in the sense that they are deities worshipped by those Aryans who reached India and composed *ṚV.* Elsewhere, he tries to trace the development of the *asura*-conception and incidentally points out that the Varuṇa-religion, which represents an ethical-religious law, is greatly influenced by the vicissitudes in the political life of the Aryans (*Garbe Comm. Vol.*, 1927).

[164] Halle (Saale), 1923.

[165] GUENTERT particularly takes into account the area extending from Germany, through the Thracophrygian area, to the Indo-Iranian regions.

All that one may say about H. D. GRISWOLD's *The Religion of the Rigveda*[166] is that it is a kind of popular, well-written text-book on the subject. As required by the "Religious Quest of India Series"[167], in which the book is published, GRISWOLD possesses in ample measure the three attributes, namely, full sympathy for things Indian, abiding faith in Christianity, and adequate scholarship. Though the author calls his book 'The Religion of the Rigveda', he restricts himself almost exclusively to the consideration of the principal Vedic gods, practically ignoring the subject of the Vedic ritual. His approach to the Vedic mythology is quite conventional; he adheres to the view that the Vedic divinities are manifestations of various forces of nature. However, he speaks of Varuṇa as the lord of the ethical law, of Indra as the lord of the cosmic law, and of Agni as the lord of the ritual order, asserting that each of these gods has his own *ṛta*. He further adds that Indra is also the god of heroic action, that he represents an apotheosis of the traits "which the Aryans lost more or less through the influence of climate and the fusion with the aborigines". It may be incidentally pointed out that GRISWOLD's writing occasionally betrays a tendency to interpret (obviously in a forced manner) the names and functions of the Vedic gods according to his own fundamental notions and to read, into Vedic passages, the ideas of later times as, for instance, in his discussion of the Vedic conception of sin. One also wonders whether the concluding chapter, in which the author deals with the religion of *ṚV* as a preparation for Christianity, does not detract from the generally sober outlook of the book[168].

If HILLEBRANDT was the moon-mythologist, Johannes HERTEL may be said to have been the fire-mythologist. The essence of HERTEL's conception of Vedic religion and mythology was that they revolved round the central theme of light and fire[169]. He believed that fire surrounded the world and pervaded every individual being. Fire was thus a universal power in macrocosm and microcosm. He further believed that, in the Veda, fire was identified with understanding (wisdom, reason, prudence) and power. Indeed, he also believed that these two ideas were not restricted only to the Veda, but that they had already been Aryan (Indo-Iranian), and, in all probability, even Indogermanic. HERTEL firmly stuck to his doctrine that *brahman* (which word he connected with *phlegma*) originally denoted the cosmic fire which streamed forth into the world, through the rifts in its covering, in the form of the sun, the moon, and other constellations[170]. He pointed out that the Aryans regarded both Soma and milk as the liquid forms of this heavenly fire[171] and imagined that by drinking them they absorbed that fire into their hearts. He even suggested that the cremation of the dead was actually meant to facilitate the passage from the mortal to the fiery (spiritual) body. HERTEL sought to establish these peculiar theories of his regarding the early Indo-Iranian *Weltanschauung* on the basis of a critical examination of such words as *yakṣa, dhenā,* and *vasu.* He insisted that these words originally denoted light and fire, and that that primitive meaning was not only suitable but was also necessary in the various Vedic (and Avestan) passages where those words occurred. His discussion in this connection was, however, obviously one-sided and clearly smacked of dogmatism. HERTEL often referred to the dualism between the powers of light and fire (whose incarnations were the Devas, who were the givers of rain and fire and who likewise were the embodiments of the highest wisdom and power) and the powers of darkness. This dualism also was Indogermanic, and did not begin, as had been generally supposed, with Zoroastrianism. According to HERTEL, the Indogermanic Deva-religion was represented in its purest form in *ṚV*, and, in its next best form in the older *Yasts.* Among other striking ideas put forth by HERTEL may be mentioned his identification of Ahura Mazdah with Bṛhaspati. He suggested that both these divinities represented the God of heaven, who had been deprived of all naturalistic attributes but in whom the concept of heavenly fire had been preserved. Then there is his assumption of the conflict between the Indra-worshipping tribes and the Mithra-adoring tribes (the Mazdayasnians). He believed that a reference to this conflict occurred in *ṚV* X. 22. The Kavis mentioned in the tenth stanza of that hymn were, according to him, the Avestan tribes of East Iran. They were there characterised as *nakṣatraśavas,* that is, as "deriving divine fire or inspiration (*śavas*) from the stars"[172], because the East Iranians looked upon the constellations Tistrya and Satavaēsa, and, above all, upon Mithra (= the starry heaven), as being peculiarly endowed with this divine fire.

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[166] New York, 1923.

[167] The purpose of the Series was to create a more sympathetic understanding of Indian religious ideas on the part of the Christians and of Christianity on the part of the Indians.

[168] For instance, GRISWOLD suggests a parallel between Agni and Jesus Christ.

[169] *Die arische Feuerlehre*, Leipzig, 1925. Also *Die Methode der arischen Forschung*, Leipzig, 1924, and other volumes in the series, "Indo-Iranische Quellen und Forschungen"

Rudolf OTTO is one of the few scholars who has approached Vedic religion and mythology not as a philologist or an Indologist, but from the point of view of the psychology and evolution of religion as such[173]. Actually what he has sought to do in his *Gottheit und Gottheiten der Arier*[174] is to apply to the Vedic religion his theory about the origin of the conception of divinity[175]. His starting point is that the genesis of the Vedic gods (or, for the matter of that, of any gods) cannot be traced back to the effects produced on men's minds by the great phenomena of nature, such as the sun, the sky, the storm, the winds, etc. It is the specific and *a priori* faculty of apperception of a power, which may best be termed a 'numen', that is at the bottom of all consciousness of divinity. OTTO tries to define numen negatively by pointing out that it does not signify mere terror or mere wonder. It is a complex entity, and among its constituents may be mentioned a consciousness of might which involves respect, a feeling of the presence of power which may be expressed as wrath (*manyu*) or as glowing flame, and a kind of victorious majesty. It reveals itself through a natural dualism of wrath and mercy. Further, this numen may exist within man himself[176], or outside man in nature or the animal world or even in the world of ideas. However, OTTO hastens to emphasise that these substrata are by no means to be regarded as the causes of numen (much less of the conception of divinity)—they merely serve as suitable occasions for its manifestation. OTTO then tries to illustrate his theory of the numinous origin of the conception of divinity by analysing the nature of various Vedic gods[177]. Vedic Varuṇa, for instance, is not the sky-god (nor, as a matter of fact, any nature-god). He is born of the numinous apperception of disease in man and beast. Further, on account of the natural dualism of aspect referred to above, Varuṇa is regarded as a sender of disease as well as its remover. Later, consequent upon the changes in the social environments and conditions of the Aryan communities, this same twofold primitive character of Varuṇa developed into that of the chastiser of sin and the upholder of moral law[178]. Vedic Viṣṇu also does not represent any natural phenomenon. He is constituted of various numina which assume different forms[179]. OTTO derives the name Viṣṇu either from the root *viś* (because the Viṣṇu-numen 'enters' into various objects) or from the root *viṣ* (because Viṣṇu assumes various *veṣas* or outer appearances)[180]. Similarly he traces the name Rudra, meaning 'howler', to the illusory strange sounds which a person having the consciousness of a numen believes to be hearing[181]. In connection with Rudra, OTTO further points out that the myth of the incest of the sky-god with his daughter[182] is the result of the misapprehension of the ancient Dravidian concept of a hermaphrodite from whom the world originates. This bisexual being is Rudra or Mahādeva or Mahī Dyauḥ. According to OTTO, the Aryans (or the Indo-Europeans) did not have a sky-god. Dyauḥ is not the sky-god, but denotes simply a god[183]. Mahī Dyauḥ mentioned in *ṚV* X.133.5 is the precursor of Mahādeva[184]. Speaking of Maruts, OTTO rejects the usual suggestion that they are the storm-gods. He thinks that men living close to nature are not likely to be so affected by the natural phenomena as to be inclined to ascribe to Maruts the characteristics of anger and fury which are assigned to them in *ṚV*. Maruts are, indeed, conceived not merely as dreadful but also as demoniac. In this connection, OTTO makes an important point. He says that the idea of 'demoniacness' does not arise in man's mind after he has come across the storm-winds; it is already there in his mind. He only projects it, as it were, and finds a suitable substratum for it in the storm-winds. The Aryans have apperceived the numinous also in such animals as the horse and the ox, as is testified by the mythological concepts of Dadhikrā[185], Dadhyaṅ, and Aśvins. OTTO connects Aśvins with the primitive yoke of cattle[186], in which the pastoral people located a numen. The idea was subsequently transferred to steeds. Aśvins came to be eventually regarded as saviour-gods because they were originally supposed to aid man with the homely products derived from the ox and the cow.

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[170] HERTEL refers to the mention of heaven "as a vast transparent mountain-range." L. D. BARNETT generally approves of HERTEL's reconstruction of Indo-Iranian *physica,* which, according to him, tally with those of the Sumerians and the Semites. He thinks that HERTEL's fire-mythology helps one to correlate the Vedic Agni-cult with the Avestan fire-worship and the Greek ideas which underlay the Eleusinian legend of Demester passing Demophon through the fire and the speculations of Herakleitos.

[171] In this connection, HERTEL refers to the mystery of the production of warm milk in the body of the cow.

[172] It may be pointed out that the word is also read as *na kṣatraśavasām.*

[173] It may be recalled that MAX MUELLER has made a more or less similar attempt in his *Hibbert Lectures.*

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[174] Giessen, 1932.

[175] Cf. OTTO's other books such as *Das Heilige*, München, 1932, and *Das Gefuehl des Ueberweltlichen*, München, 1932.

[176] As examples of humans bearing the numen within themselves, OTTO mentions Keśin (*ṚV* X.136), the Atharvans, and the Aṅgirases.

[177] This analysis is, of course, tendentious.

[178] In this context, OTTO connects Apollo as Apopellon with Varuṇa.

[179] OTTO interprets the doctrine of *avatāras* on the basis of this assumption.

[180] In this connection, OTTO mentions Śālagrāma. He thinks that Viṣṇu's appellations like *nara*, *narottama*, *nārāyaṇa*, etc., can be satisfactorily explained only on this assumption. Śipiviṣṭa, it is pointed out, is the numen immanent in the organ of generation.

The most significant contribution of J. PRZYLUSKI to the study of the Vedic mythology was that he drew pointed attention to what might be called the non-Aryan (non-IE) elements in that mythology. In this connection, he mainly thought of the Austro-Asiatic culture-complex. PRZYLUSKI believed that the Aryans had come into contact with the Austro-Asiatic people at various points in the course of their wanderings and colonisation-activities, and had thereby been substantially influenced in their way of life and thought. By way of a striking example of such influence he mentioned the Vedic Varuṇa-mythology[187]. The concept of Varuṇa, he asserted, was borrowed by the Vedic Aryans from the neighbouring Austro-Asiatic people. These latter worshipped the god of sea as their greatest god. The realm of this god lay beneath the waters of the sea. The Aryans, having come into contact with the Austro-Asiatic people, borrowed from them their great god in his original character as the god of sea. That was Varuṇa. PRZYLUSKI agreed with PISCHEL and KRETSCHMER[188] in their assumption that Vedic Varuṇa was originally the god of ocean. According to him, the introduction of this new god into the Aryan mythology marked the weakening of the Brahmanic orthodoxy and the entry upon the scene of the recently assimilated population. PRZYLUSKI suggested that, just as the concept of Varuṇa was derived from the Austro-Asiatic mythology, the name Varuṇa also was derived from the Austro-Asiatic language. The name Varuṇa was connected with the Austro-Asiatic word *baru* (*bharu*) which meant 'sea'. However, PRZYLUSKI went on to point out, since, for the continental Aryans, the sea did not have the same importance as for the maritime Austro-Asiatic people, in the Vedic religion, the sovereign god could not be regarded as residing at the bottom of the ocean. He had to be elevated, and enthroned in the highest heaven, on the top of the world-mountain. Varuṇa thus first came to be attached to Asura, the god of the sky, and was eventually identified with him. Nevertheless, a section from among the Aryans always remained faithful to the Austro-Asiatic Varuṇa, the god of the sea[189].

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[181] Incidentally it may be pointed out that, for the elucidation of his theory, OTTO lays great store upon the *Śatarudriya*.

[182] She is supposed to be Uṣas. OTTO suggests that Uṣas, who is characterised as *dakṣiṇā*, reappears as Ḍakkhinī in Buddhist texts.

[183] The tendency to associate gods with the sky is, according to OTTO, late.

[184] OTTO explains *ekadyū* (*ṚV* VIII. 80. 10) as 'a reverer of one god, devotee of an *iṣṭa-devatā* '.

[185] Dadhikrā is the stallion who brings about the production of milk in the mares. Later, this figure is given the name of Dadhikrāvan—no longer a horse, but a subject which possesses horse or mare. The name is significant of the development of a numen.

[186] He thinks that *nāsatya* refers to the broad noses of cattle in India.

[187] " Varuṇa, god of the sea and the sky, " *JRAS* 1931.

The concepts of Aditi and Aśvins provided, according to PRZYLUSKI, yet another evidence of the non-Aryan elements in the Vedic mythology[190]. PRZYLUSKI found for Aditi a prototype in the Great Goddess of the early religions of Western Asia[191]. A special feature of the ritual connected with this Great Goddess was flagellation, the main purpose of which was the renewal of the life of the creatures, the augmentation of their vigour, and the stimulation of their power of reproduction. Some traces of the idea of flagellation could be discovered in the Aditi-mythology in the Veda. In a passage in the *Atharvaveda* (IX. 1), Aditi was frequently referred to as *madhukaśā*[192]; and, in the primitive ideology, both *madhu* (honey) and *kaśā* (whip) were the principal constituents of the ritual of flagellation. PRZYLUSKI further pointed out that Aśvins too were closely connected with *madhu*. This conceptual affinity between Aditi and Aśvins was but a reflection of the West Asian mythology relating to the Great Goddess attended by two cavaliers (originally by two animals, by two horses)[193]. In the Veda, Aśvins were sometimes represented as the attendants of Aditi. The original non-Aryn character of Aśvins seems to have been indicated by their other name Nāsatyau. This latter name was presumably an Aryanised form of some Austro-Asiatic word: *Satya* might be connected with Austro-Asiatic *sadam* which means 'horse'[194], while *na* might be regarded as just an affix[195]. Aśvins were originally divine horses and later became divine cavaliers. PRZYLUSKI put forth two other suggestions in connection with the Vedic Great Goddess: firstly, that, in the Vedic period, the Great Goddess and her attendants were sometimes represented under the form of a divine tree surmounted by two birds[196], and, secondly, that, in the Vedic religion, as in Syria, the Great Goddess came to be transformed into the sun (Suryā). He believed that the three stages of human evolution were respectively the economic, the social, and the spiritual, and that, in the first stage, the Great Goddess was the Mistress of Animals, in the second, she became the wife of two men (an idea indirectly represented in the mythology of Aditi and Aśvins), and in the third, she became the wife of one husband (as suggested by the myth of Sūryā, the wife of the two Aśvins,, becoming the wife of one Soma)[197]. A mention may be made in this context of another of PRZYLUSKI's propositions, namely, that Vedic Viṣṇu, who had no counterpart in IE mythology, was to be connected with non-Aryan Viṭh, a race living in Veṭhadīpa in the Deccan[198].

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[188] See foot-note 189 below.

[189] P. KRETSCHMER thinks (" Varuṇa und die Urgeschichte der Inder ", *WZKM* 33, 1926) that Varuṇa is derived from Hittite Aruna, the god of sea. That is to say, Varuṇa is the Indianised form of the West Asian word, *aruna*, which means 'sea'. He further says: The religion of the Aryans developed in the opposite directions. One section adopted the Hittite Aruna, god of the sea; these were the ancestors of the Indians, who, during the post-Vedic times, continued to recognise in Varuṇa a sea-god. As for the Indians who adhered to the Vedic religion, they amalgamated Aruna and Asura, the god of the sea and the god of the sky. The worshippers of Varuṇa, the sea-god, regarded those, who made Varuṇa the Asura, as heretics, and in the end the belief of the former prevailed after the Vedic epoch. According to KRETSCHMER, all Indians had to pass through a fore-Asiatic epoch, which left clear traces in their religion, language, and culture. Like Varuṇa, Indra also was traced back to the Hittite mythology. KRETSCHMER connects Indra with the Hittite god Inaras (" Zum Ursprung des Gottes Indra ", Wien, 1927, and " Indra und der hethitische Gott Inaras ", *KF* 1, 1928). KRETSCHMER further suggests that the concept of Kubera and the game of dice, among other things, are borrowed by the Indians from the Hittites and the Mitannians.

[190] " Aditi—the Great Mother ", *HJAS* 1, 1936; " Les Aśvin et la Grande Déesse ", *HJAS* 1, 1936.

[191] Other variants of this Great Goddess were, according to PRZYLUSKI, Anāhita in Iran, Anat in Palestine, Nanā, Nanai, and Tanais in Syria and Asia Minor.

Among the Western scholars who have written about Vedic religion and mythology, A. Berriedale KEITH is perhaps the most prolific as well as the most encyclopaedic. One may say without any fear of contradiction that in the two sumptuous volumes of *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*

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[192] KEITH points out that, in this passage, Aditi cannot be said to have been directly described as *madhukaśā*. Madhukaśā is described as the mother of Ādityas, among other things.

[193] In this connection, PRZYLUSKI refers to the Thasos relief where the Mother Goddess is shown as supported by two horsemen.

[194] In modern Muṇḍā, *sadam* means 'horse'.

[195] As in *baru, baru-na, varuṇa.*

[196] Cf. *ṚV* X. 114.3; I. 164.20.

[197] *La grande déesse*, Paris, 1950.

[198] "La nom du dieu Viṣṇu et la légende de Kṛṣṇa", *Arch. Or.* 4, 1932. PRZYLUSKI also connects Viṭhal—Viṭhobā with this race.

and Upanishads,[199] KEITH provides ample evidence of his thorough acquaintance with almost everything that had been published on the subject till then. His genius, however, is essentially negative. His forte may be said to consist in trying to show how the theories advanced by other scholars are deficient. His own approach to the subject is usually unimaginative; his attitude is over-cautious—he shrinks from setting forth any positive views. His motto seems to have been: Confession of ignorance, however tantalizing, is better than assumption of knowledge. Notwithstanding all this, it must be conceded that, in *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*, he has presented a very competent survey of all—or, almost all—existing knowledge about a wide range of topics relating to Vedic religion and philosophy. In that book, he begins with a study of the sources, and then, in its four major divisions, he deals in great detail respectively with the gods and demons of the Veda, Vedic ritual, the spirits of the dead, and the philosophy of the Veda. In the Appendix, he takes up for critical discussion such topics as the age of the *Avesta* and *ṚV*, the sacrifice of Puruṣa and the origin of the world[200], the Aryan conception of the heaven[201], the drink of immortality[202], the IE fire-cult, cremation and burial, and the Dravidian element in Indian thought. KEITH's work thus constitutes a comprehensive digest on Vedism[203].

So far as the Vedic mythology is concerned, KEITH is by no means a heretic—he is usually inclined to adhere to what are generally regarded as conventional views on the subject. Like BLOOMFIELD, he adopts, in this connection, the policy of "wise conservatism". He believes that *ṚV* is the one and universal document concerning Vedic religion and mythology. He further believes that most of the Vedic gods are personifications of the great powers of nature, though, on rare occasions, he admits that "many gods are not gods of nature and much myth may well be due to ritual". He has no sympathy for OTTO's theory regarding religion being the result of the working of the numinous fancy of the primitive man. He agrees with L. de LA VALLÉE POUSSIN in rejecting WINTERNITZ's suggestion that *ṚV* presents "a mythology in the making". According to him, most of the gods appear in the Veda as already established entities with a long previous history. Again, most of them have already developed complex characters—a phenomenon, which, he asserts, can be satisfactorily explained only on the assumption of syncretism. KEITH accepts the identification of Varuṇa with Ouranos, even though he thinks that there are certain phonetic difficulties involved in such identification. Both Varuṇa and Ouranos represent the all-encompassing vault of the sky[204]. Mitra is undoubtedly the sun. KEITH criticises the view of KRETSCHMER that Vedic Varuṇa was derived from Hittite Aruna and that, therefore, he was originally the god of the ocean. He points out that the Aryans already had, from the most ancient period, a god of the sky who subsequently became Asura. There is, indeed, no reason for assuming (as KRETSCHMER does) the twofold divergence in the Varuṇa-mythology—the schism, that is to say, between the cult of Varuṇa (Aruna) the sea-god and that of Varuṇa (Asura) the sky-god. Further KEITH pertinently asks whether there actually was a Hittite god called Aruna. KEITH also views with disfavour PRZYLUSKI's theory about Varuṇa. He thinks that the main plank on which PRZYLUSKI has sought to raise his superstructure, namely, the assumption of the Austro-Asiatic origin for a number of Vedic (Sanskrit) words, is deplorably weak. The Austro-Asiatic forms mentioned by PRZYLUSKI in this connection are of a palpably late date. Moreover, PRZYLUSKI has not been able to explain satisfactorily when and where the Aryans encountered the Austro-Asiatic people and how the concept of Varuṇa came to be borrowed by the former from the latter. And, finally, KEITH asks in his dominant mood of wise conservatism : Is it not simpler to accept that Varuṇa is identical with Ouranos ? He also argues that the development of Varuṇa the sky-god into Varuṇa the sea-god is quite natural in view of Varuṇa's connection with the waters of the heaven. In spite of the new theories regarding the original characters of Pūṣan and Viṣṇu[205], KEITH still sticks to the orthodox view that they are sun-gods. Aśvins are connected with natural phenomena. KEITH controverts PRZYLUSKI's suggestion about the mythology of the Great Goddess (Aditi) and the two cavaliers (Aśvins) having been adopted by the Vedic Indians from the Western Asian religious complex. Indeed, there are very few points of contact between Aditi and Aśvins as represented in the Veda. KEITH also doubts that Aśvins were originally horses. He does not understand how an ancient name like Nāsatya can be connected with a later Muṇḍā word like *sadam*. He thinks that Nāsatya means " healer ". It is surely strange that KEITH is inclined to accept the historical existence of Indra's foes but not of Indra himself. He does not believe that there is any connection between Rudra-Śiva and the Vrātyas[206]. He regards Gandharva as a heavenly being. As for the concept of *brahman*, KEITH says that the word *brahman* already occurs in *ṚV* as an established term with a long history. Accordingly, its origin is difficult to determine.

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[199] Harvard Oriental Series, Vol. 31 and 32, 1925.

[200] Particularly the views of GUENTERT regarding Yama.

[201] With special reference to HERTEL's theories.

[202] DUMEZIL's views are here subjected to a critical examination.

[203] Apart from *RPVU*, reference must needs be made to KEITH's numerous other articles and critical reviews.

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[204] KEITH rejects the lunar theory of OLDENBERG and HILLEBRANDT.

[205] In this context, a special reference may be made to the original views put forth by K. F. JOHANSSON (*Solfaegeln i Indien*, Uppsala, 1910; *Ueber die altindische Goettin Dhiṣaṇā und Verwandtes*, Uppsala, 1919). JOHANSSON lays great stress on the wide prevalence of fertility-cult in ancient India. He has also put forth some startling views about Varuṇa. Through his *Trilogie der altindischen Maechte und Feste*, Zürich, 1937, MEYER offers a comprehensive study of ancient Indian cults of vegetation and fertility.

[206] As suggested by E. ARBMAN in his remarkable book, *Rudra : Untersuchungen zum altindischen Glauben und Kultus*, Uppsala, 1922.

While discussing in a lengthy article the "Modern theories of religion and the Veda"[207], Keith points out that the possible occurrence of totemism in the Vedic religion cannot be denied. But he hesitates to accept as convincing the evidence usually put forth in this connection, such as the names of tribes like Matsyas, Ajas, Māṇḍūkeyas, and Vatsas, and the reference in the *Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa* to Kūrma (Kaśyapa) being the father of the human race. At the same time, he believes, as against Hillebrandt, that traces of totemism may be seen in the selection or avoidance of certain animals for sacrifice. In this connection, he quotes *Pāraskara-Gṛhyasūtra* III. 11. 10 which says: "At a sacrifice directed to a special deity, the animal belonging to that deity should be offered". He concludes that "totemism merely accounts for the rare ceremonial eating of the slain god and *not* for the numerous instances of animal sacrifice found in early Vedic religion". Totemism must have been in an advanced stage of decay when the practices in question were in vogue. Keith does not agree with Hillebrandt (and Oldenberg and Hopkins) in his views regarding the difference between the Vedic conception of animal sacrifice and the Semitic conception. He thinks that, while, according to both the conceptions, the animal is chosen because of its close connection with the god, and, in the actual sacrifice, it is filled with that god's divinity, the Indian does not see in the death of the victim the death of the god. Similarly, the victim is not regarded as a close kin by the Indian sacrificer as by the Semitic. As for human sacrifice, Keith's view is that the Vedic Indians cannot have failed to practise a rite of which instances are found in many religions. But it must have been a rare offering—"seldom, if at all, put in force". So little notice is taken of it in ancient Indian literature. According to Keith, the sacrifice to Jumbaka on the head of a man of repulsive appearance is not a relic of the Vedic practice of slaying the aged and worn-out king. The man is clearly a scapegoat, and the purpose of the offering is to remove the guilt of the village outcastes. Keith considers the analogies between Vedic sacrifices and Greek mysteries[208] to be precipitate. About Schroeder's theory regarding mysteries and mimes in *ṚV*, he opines that there is no doubt that drama represents the outcome of a vegetation ritual; but vegetation rituals are not characteristic of the Indian Aryan religion, and there is no evidence of any drama proper having been evolved in Vedic times.

J. Charpentier was an ardent critic of the methods and most of the conclusions of Keith[209]. He was a confirmed anti-naturalist. He held that the moon was not impersonated in the austere and majestic figure of Varuṇa, nor was the sun the nature-substratum of Viṣṇu. Indra was not the god of thunder or summer-heat; he was "the heroic and somewhat grotesque chief of a flock of early knights-errant ",[210] who was, in course of time, transformed into their god by a " rustic, semi-nomadic, strong, and half-barbarous people ". On the other hand, Varuṇa and Mitra must have originated in a society where law and order were regarded as particularly important. Varuṇa was the king in " a well-ordered city-state ". In a society which had not quite settled down, such a superhuman enforcer of law and order was bound to present a somewhat sinister aspect. This would account for the darker features of Varuṇa's character. The concepts of Varuṇa and Mitra implied a much higher civilization than the Indo-Iranian civilization. It was, therefore, not unlikely, according to CHARPENTIER, that those two gods had been borrowed by the Indo-Iranians from some other people. As regards Aśvins, CHARPENTIER accepted the view of the Aitihāsikas and saw in those divinities two beneficent saviour-princes of yore. Further, he suggested that the mysterious qualities accorded to the smith in ancient tales might account for part of the character of Ṛbhus[211]. It might be remembered that, in the IE period, a prominent position was generally assigned to the wainwright. According to CHARPENTIER, the early and close connection between Ṛbhus and Rathakāras could be taken as well-established. Their rival was Tvaṣṭṛ, who presumably represented the old-fashioned craftsmanship as against the new techniques evolved by Ṛbhus. CHARPENTIER understood the word *apsaras* in the sense of " body-less ", " form-less "; Apsaras was a being, who could, at her own sweet will, assume different forms. In his noteworthy monograph, *Brahman*[212], CHARPENTIER undertook a thorough, critical study of the concept of *brahman* from the linguistic, exegetical, and religio-historical points of view. He accepted HILLEBRANDT's proposition that the Vedic *brahman* and the Avestan *barəsman* were closely related to each other and originally denoted a bunch of sacrificial grass[213]. He then showed how that original conception of *brahman* later on developed in the directions of magical power, hymn or spell, and the ultimate principle of the universe. Another noteworthy contribution of CHARPENTIER to the study of the Vedic mythology was *Die Suparṇa-Sage*[214]. In this monograph, CHARPENTIER analysed the various motifs of the Suparṇa-legend, and thereby also threw light on several problems connected with Indian legends in general.

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[207] *JRAS*, 1907.

[208] As suggested by Jackson, *JRAS*, 1908.

[209] Cf. *BSOS* 4. Indeed, this attitude was reciprocal in the case of these two scholars.

In his posthumously published magnum opus, *Varuṇa*[215], Heinrich LUEDERS deals with such topics as the position of Varuṇa as a resident of water and a denizen of heaven, the tripartition of heaven, the relation between the terrestrial and the celestial seas and rivers, Indra's combat with Vṛtra, and the rôle of Soma. He considers Varuṇa's essential character to be that of the god of oath. Adverting to the concept of *ṛta*, LUEDERS points out that the German word *Wahrheit* covers the exact and whole meaning of *ṛta*. *Ṛta* subsequently came to be regarded as a cosmic principle. Betty HEIMANN felt that, in the early Veda, Varuṇa was not represented as an entirely independent god; he was only the instrument of *ṛta*[216]. In *ṚV*, the concept of Varuṇa was simultaneously macrocosmic and microcosmic. Varuṇa also became the extended cosmic representation of an earthly kingship. Further, according to HEIMANN, the idea of a primary monotheism was in no way reflected in *ṚV*. She thought that W. SCHMIDT's view that all polytheism was a distortion of an original *Ur-gott*—of original monotheism—was not valid for Vedic mythology[217]. Similarly, ' pantheism ' or ' theopanism ' was not an adequate characterisation of the Vedic religion. HEIMANN sought to provide a philosophical rationalisation for Vedic henotheism[218]. She also insisted that the henotheism of *ṚV* must be viewed together with the later concepts of *iṣṭa-devatā* and *bhakti*. Her treatment of the supra-personal process of the Vedic sacrifice [219] fits in well with her general conception of the ancient Indian *Weltanschauung*.

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[210] According to CHARPENTIER, the localization of the conflicts between this burly chieftain and his various enemies, as suggested by KONOW and BARNETT, was not convincing.

[211] He believed that comparative philology did not offer much help in connection with these divine forms.

[212] Uppsala, 1932.

[213] According to CHARPENTIER, a Brahmacārin was one who had a girdle of sacrificial grass.

[214] Uppsala, 1921.

[215] Vol. I, Göttingen, 1951; Vol. II, Göttingen, 1959,

This longish survey may now be concluded with a brief reference to the work of some of the contemporary Western scholars. To begin with Georges DUMÉZIL, his basic dogma pertains to the tripartite ideology of the Indo-Europeans. According to DUMÉZIL, it is possible to deduce from a critical and comparative study of the oldest Indo-Iranian, Celtic, Italian, and Greek sources that the Indo-Europeans had the conception of a social structure based on the distinction and hierarchisation of three functions, namely of priests, warriors, and producers. This conception gave rise to their tripartite mythology[220]. DUMÉZIL divides the Aryan gods into three main classes—moral, military, and economic. So far as Vedic religion and mythology are concerned, the two antithetical but complementary divine rulers Mitra and Varuṇa are the representatives of the first class, Indra (or Vāyu) of the second class, and Aśvins of the third class[221]. As for Varuṇa, DUMÉZIL asserts that there is a very close affinity between Varuṇa and Ouranos—both linguistically and conceptually[222]. The two words, *varuṇa* and *ouranos*, are to be derived from the root **uer* which means 'to fasten', 'to bind'. The idea of bondage is clearly expressed through the *pāśas* of Varuṇa. Bondage is a primary feature also of the character of Ouranos. He is the "master of the bond", the fetterer of his foes. Filial rivalry is common to both these mythologies. Ouranos as sovereign is threatened by his sons, while Varuṇa's son Bhṛgu regards himself as superior to his father[223]. Another common point is the impotence brought upon these two gods. In this connection, Ouranos was the victim of the machinations of his wife Gaia and Kronos. DUMÉZIL finds in *AV* IV. 4. 1 a mention of the loss of Varuṇa's virility. Further, he adverts, in this context, to the Rājasūya sacrifice of which Varuṇa is the god. It is suggested that, after Varuṇa had heen consecrated as the first world-sovereign, he was deprived of his manly vigour, probably on account of the sprinkling over him of the waters of consecration. This loss of manly vigour on Varuṇa's part resulted in the fructification of nature. Much stress is laid by DUMÉZIL upon the close connection between the king and vegetation-life. There existed in ancient times a primitive practice according to which, in order to renew the worn-out life in nature, it was necessary for the king to immolate himself, or, at his consecration, to offer in sacrifice to Varuṇa his own son or at least a substitute. The legend of Śunaḥśepa is regarded as particularly significant in this connection. DUMÉZIL also seeks to explain the concept of *brahman* in the light of this practice[224]. According to him, the word *brahman* is to be traced back to IE **bhelgh*, which had a religio-magical sense. Greek *pharmakos* and Latin *flamen* are also to be connected with **bhelgh*. Thus *brahman*, like *flamen*, originally means a scape-goat. DUMÉZIL contends that Brāhmaṇas achieved historical importance mainly as substitutes for the royal victim, who, according to the primitive belief, had to be sacrificed for reviving life in nature. Kings were in the habit of maintaining men to act as substitutes during the periods of epidemics, famines, or other occasions for reviving the life of nature, when "royal blood had to be spilled for public good". Such men (Brahman–Brāhmaṇas) were treated with formal deference, and would take part in the sacrificial offering of one of their number thereby acquiring a sombre prestige. DUMÉZIL adds that the magical conception of a scape-goat underwent a parallel development in India, Greece, and Rome. DUMÉZIL accounts for Varuṇa's close connection with waters in two ways: Varuṇa is the guardian of the ritual order, and waters are a great ritual agency; that is why Varuṇa is so closely connected with waters. There is affinity between Varuṇa and waters also because both of them are responsible for fecundity in nature.

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[216] *Kant Stud.* 30.

[217] The idea of ur-monotheism, as a starting primitive conception, does not seem convincing; it comes at the end of primitive thought.

[218] *ABORI* 28; *Belvalkar Felicitation Vol.*, 1957.

[219] *RSO* 32.

[220] *L'idéologie tripartie des Indo-Européens*, Brussels, 1958.

[221] DUMEZIL mentions Jupiter, Mars, and Quirinus in this very connection. He also refers to other aspects of this tripartition, such as injustice, war, famine; harming by charms, physical violence, theft; three types of medicine, etc. Attention may be drawn to BROUGH's critique of DUMEZIL's dogma (*BSOAS* 22). THIEME (*Mitra and Aryaman*, New Haven, 1957) rejects DUMEZIL's threefold classification of the Indo-Iranian gods.

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[222] *Ouranos-Varuṇa*, Paris, 1934.

[223] *Jaiminīya-Brāhmaṇa* I.44. However, DUMEZIL appears to be stretching this allusion too far.

[224] *Flamen-Brahman*, Paris, 1935.

Mitra, says DUMÉZIL, is the Aryan god of contracts. He analyses the double sovereignty of Mitra-Varuṇa by pointing out that Mitra represents the clear, calm, benevolent, sacerdotal aspect while Varuṇa represents the assailant, sombre, inspiring, violent, terrible, warlike aspect[225]. Mitra is *brahman*, Varuṇa is *rāj*[226]. DUMÉZIL regards Aryaman as representing the third aspect of sovereignty[227]. He emphasises the great similarity, both from the points of view of mythical function and activity, between Aryaman of the Indo-Iranian mythology and Heros Eremon of the Irish folk-legends. Among other Vedic divinities, DUMÉZIL considers Viṣṇu and Maruts particularly with reference to the Zoroastrian reform[228]. DUMÉZIL has, so to say, revived comparative mythology laying greater stress on conceptual rather than linguistic equations. For instance, he draws pointed attention to the parallelism between the fundamental structure of the ancient Roman religion and that of the Vedic religion[229]. According to him, Roman Mater Matuta is identical with Uṣas, it being possible to explain the rites connected with the former by reference to the myths connected with the latter. Similarly Roman goddess Angerona is equated with the goddess of short days (*ṚV* V.40.5–8), Fortuna Primigenia with Aditi, and Lua Mater with Nirṛti in her divine character. At the same time, DUMÉZIL also emphasises the connection of Pāṇḍava heroes with Vedic divinities [230]. He suggests that Vāyu (Bhīma) is perhaps earlier than Indra (Arjuna) as war-god. He further suggests that the Kṛṣṇa-Arjuna conflict perhaps reflects the conflict between the ancient Indo-Iranian solar mythology and the later Vedic Indra-mythology[231].

In his *Religions of India*[232], Louis RENOU devotes two chapters to the consideration of the Vedic religion. He regards *ṚV* as a " literary anthology drawn from family traditions. " He also assumes the existence of an Ur-Veda, which existed before the emergence of the Vedic schools and which incorporated in itself the mythology and the ritual which had arisen in the original Vedic community. According to RENOU, there is, in the Vedic religion, a blend of ritual and mythology, each of which needs to be explained with the aid of the other. RENOU generally accepts the views of BERGAIGNE—he seems to be particularly in sympathy with the view that all mythological portrayals in the Veda are but variants of the sacred fire and the sacred drink[233]. However, *ṚV* cannot be regarded as a mere ancillary to ritual. The function of sacrifice, says RENOU, is to bring together all uncoordinated phenomena and build them up into an organic whole. He adds that the *Upaniṣads* carry the speculations of the *Mantra* and the *Brāhmaṇa* to their logical conclusion. As for the relation between the Indus valley civilisation and the Vedic civilisation, RENOU suggests that one does not owe anything to the other. He, however, thinks that some form of Hinduism already existed in Vedic times (and certainly went back to the Indus valley civilisation) and that the esoterism of Tantra can be traced back to the Veda itself. Elsewhere RENOU has treated in some detail of the Vedic god Indra[234]. Referring to Indra's epithet *vṛtrahan*, he points out that, both in the Avestan and the Vedic mythology, Vṛtrahan originally represented the rather abstract concept of a god who destroyed resistances (*vṛtrāṇi*). Later on, that god came to be absorbed by the hero Indra who had been transformed into a god. RENOU points out that, in the *Atharvaveda*, Indra is represented more concretely and in a more life-like manner[235].

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[225] *Mitra-Varuṇa*, Paris, 1948. THIEME (*op. cit.*) accepts MEILLET'S view that Mitra in *ṚV* personifies contract exclusively. He does not agree with DUMEZIL in his assumption of the distinction in the roles of Mitra and Varuṇa. Varuṇa, according to him, signifies ' true speech. '

[226] DUMEZIL juxtaposes *rāj-brahman* and *rex-flamen.*

[227] *Le troisième souverain*, Paris, 1949. Incidentally, DUMEZIL interprets *ari* as " average fellow-countryman ". According to THIEME (*op. cit.*), *ari* means " stranger " and Aryaman is God Hospitality.

[228] *JA* 241.

[229] *Déesses latines et mythes védiques*, Brussels, 1956.

[230] *Orientalia Suecana*, 1954 and 1957. He connects Dharma with Mitra, Bhīṣma with Dyauḥ, and Kṛṣṇa with Viṣṇu.

[231] Kutsa, who benefits by Indra's intervention against Sūrya, is often referred to as Ārjuneya in *ṚV* (I.112.23; IV.26.1; VII.19.2).

[232] London, 1953.

Like KEITH, Jan GONDA is a prolific and versatile writer on Vedism, having a firm command over an impressive array of bibliographical material; but, unlike KEITH, GONDA has definite view-point of his own, which has oriented all his writings. He contends that " for a more complete (or rather, a less incomplete) understanding of *ṚV*, a deeper understanding of primitive and semi-primitive culture, a deeper insight into the thought, inner life, religion, literature, etc., of the primitive man is necessary ". For the primitive man, a close contact, a parallelism, a mutual influence between nature and the world of man are always extant. GONDA tries to illustrate this point by a detailed study of the *Maṇḍūka-Sūkta* in *ṚV* (VII. 103)[236]. He thinks that it is wrong to speak of ' secular ' hymns in *ṚV*, for, broadly speaking, there is nothing exclusively ' secular ' or ' profane ' (in the modern sense of the words) in *ṚV*. In the Vedic society, characterised by the primitive aspects of the human mind and human culture, the religious—

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[233] H. LOMMEL has attempted a study of Soma and Agni in " König Soma ", *Numen* 2. Soma, according to him, is the fluid principle of the continuity of life.

[234] E. BENVENISTE and L. RENOU, *Vṛtra et Vṛthragna*, Paris, 1934. V. MACHEK suggests (*Arch. Or.* 28) that Viṣṇu may have been the original Verethragna. There is a reference to the latter's *avatāras*. Incidentally, mention may be made of MACHEK's views that Aśvins are indigenous IE deities (and not two Indian princes) (*Arch. Or.* 15), that Rudra is the divine shepherd—the manager of cattle in the aristocratic court of heaven, and that Pūṣan is the ' second ' or ' younger ' shepherd (*Arch. Or.* 22).

[235] *NIA* 8. LOMMEL says that there are three fields of Indra's activity—those connected with the sun, the tempest, and the battle (*Der arische Kriegsgott*, Frankfurt, 1939). MACHEK thinks that *indra* is an IE adjective meaning ' strong ', ' virile ', and is used merely as an epithet of the Vedic god.

[236] *Orientalia Neerlandica*, 1948.

or, to be more precise, the magico-religious—element cannot be detached from other domains of human thought. **Gonda** avers that, in Vedic times, 'religion' and 'magic' are inextricably interlaced. Accordingly, he emphasises the magico-religious significance of various Vedic concepts. For instance, he studies words like *alaṁkāra* and *bhūṣati* and shows how they basically imply "magically causing one to become more complete, stronger, more beautiful, and more honourable" or "investing with magical power". Speaking of the Purohita, **Gonda** says that the Purohita is so called because, like several divinities who are called *purohita*, he holds as shield in front of the person to be protected "the strength of the magical potences attaching to his own persons". The sacrificial *dakṣiṇā* is by no means conceived as the salary or fee of the priest; rather, by paying it the sacrificer magically buys himself loose from the priest. According to **Gonda**, religious festivals (and sacrifices) were the means employed by the primitive man to stimulate or resuscitate the vital powers of nature. This can be seen from the original sense of the word of *utsava*[237]. **Gonda** has similarly stressed the magico-religious significance of many other words and concepts like *guru*, *māyā*, *pratiṣṭhā*, *sarva*, and *aṁhas*. Subjecting to a critical examination all the earlier views about *brahman*,[238] he concludes that the notion behind *brahman* is that of a vast but not unspecific power of support and foundation, which in the speech of the Vedic priest-poets was especially articulated as "ritual, sacred, or magical utterance".

In his *Aspects of Early Viṣṇuism*[239], **Gonda** discusses the question of how Viṣṇu, who had held a subordinate position in the Ṛgvedic pantheon, came to be elevated to supreme godhead in the later mythology. In that connection he considers such separate topics as Viṣṇu and fertility, Viṣṇu and Indra, Viṣṇu and *vajra*, Viṣṇu and the sun, Viṣṇu and the mountains, Viṣṇu and *yūpa*, and Viṣṇu and kingship, pinpointing those characteristics of the Vedic deity "which have persisted and reached maturity in the subsequent period and which enable us to gain an insight into those factors which helped, or even predisposed, him to gain the high position which he occupies in Hinduism." He points out that the ancient Indian views regarding Viṣṇu show a remarkable degree of consistency, and that the two most prominent characteristics of Viṣṇu are his "pervasiveness" and his identification with sacrifice. In the course of his discussion, **Gonda** has made several points of religio-historical significance. For instance, he says that one cannot deny the existence of a form of worship among the Vedic Aryans or characterise it as autochthonous because *ṚV* is silent about it. Similarly, an Aryan, Austric, or Dravidian name does not necessarily indicate a religious cult of exclusively Aryan, Austric, or Dravidian origin. The existence of a particular god or cult among the primitive non-Aryan tribes does not exclude the possibility of an independent evolution of a similar god or cult within the original Aryan community. The nature of Vedic Agni forms one of the many subjects treated in GONDA's *Some Observations on the Relations between Gods and Powers*[240]. With reference to Agni's epithet *sahasaḥ sūnuḥ*, GONDA suggests that, by establishing a filial relationship between an entity and a power, the entity in question becomes a representative of that power—it actually becomes that power[241]. He further suggests that the designation of Agni as 'son' may be connected with the conception that the churning of the fire represents a sexual act. GONDA's recent publication, *Die Religionen Indiens I : Veda und alterer Hinduismus*[242], may be said to contain a conspectus of his typical views regarding Vedic religion and mythology. In the first four chapters of this treatise, the author presents an illuminating and thought-provoking survey of the religious ideology of the Veda[243], under such headings as the Veda, Brāhmaṇas, and Powers, the Gods, the Rites, and the Religious and Philosophical Speculations. GONDA's peculiar magico-religious view-point is unmistakably reflected throughout the treatment of the subject, as evince such dicta as "knowledge implies power and becomes efficacious through ritual operations (which are ineffective without the corresponding knowledge)", "the power of knowledge often manifests in the old 'magical' way", and "esoteric knowledge is a source of practically applicable power".

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[237] *Utsava* means "generating, stimulating, producing (power)"; its other cognates are *savitṛ* and *prasava*. The notions expressed in *ṚV* by the words *utsava* and *āji* are, according to **Gonda**, closely related.

[238] *Notes on Brahman*, Utrecht, 1950. Among the views so examined are: **Osthoff** (*brahman-bricht, magic*); **Oldenberg** (*mantra*); **Hertel** (*Flegma*, firebrand); **Charpentier** (*baresman*); **Dumezil** (*flamen*); **Renou** (cosmic enigma); and **Thieme** (formation either of an embryo or of a poem).

[239] Utrecht, 1954.

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[240] 's-Gravenhage, 1957.

[241] According to GONDA, *sahas* means "overwhelming, victorious power." It may be mentioned in this context that GONDA interprets the Vedic word *ojas* as denoting a magic-religious power-substance (creative or vital power). In the later Veda, the word began to suggest also the idea of power of fertility.

[242] Stuttgart, 1960.

[243] In the Introduction, GONDA briefly describes the pre-Vedic religious tendencies.